Proceedings of the

Security Options for a Troubled World

conference

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List of Abbreviations

AI	Artificial Intelligence
ASAT	Anti-satellite weapon
ATT	Arms Trade Treaty
BRICS	BRICS is an intergovernmental organization comprising of 9 countries - Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Iran, Egypt, Ethiopia, and the United Arab Emirates
CCW	UN Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons
G7	The Group of Seven: Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, United Kingdom, and United States
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
OEWG	Open-Ended Working Group
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
P5	5 permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (United States, China, France, Russia, and the United Kingdom)
PMO	Office of the Prime Minister
UN	United Nations
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
US	United States of America

Summary

Held in the midst of troubled times and a potential unraveling of the rules-based international order, this policy conference hosted by the Canadian Pugwash Group (CPG) and the Centre for International Policy Studies (CIPS) focused on “Security Options for a Troubled World”.

Six panels covered a wide variety of topics, giving participants much to consider moving forward. The first panel focused on nuclear arms control, providing an overview of two kinds of instability facing this nuclear age, along with how to potentially address these instabilities. There was also discussion of entrenching the norm against possession, as well as paying attention to the machinery under which nuclear disarmament is happening. The second panel looked at autonomous weapons and AI, highlighting how algorithmic warfare is already very much in use today and yet we still don’t understand the logic and decision making of the large language models powering AI. The third panel looked at the current issues with UN peace operations, but also the necessity of this organization and what changes need to be made.

The fourth panel addressed the current status of the Outer Space Treaty and the lack of further agreement or progress that has been made. The fifth panel highlighted the Arms Trade Treaty and Canada’s lack of adherence to it, as well as a look at the concept of common security. The final panel addressed the double standards that Canada has when dealing with global crises, the likely change in government, and guidance for how Canada should engage with the UN and the US.

The CPG-CIPS policy conference provided a unique platform for engagement with leading experts, policymakers, researchers and the concerned public, as part of an ongoing discourse on how best to navigate our troubled world.

Introductions and Scene Setting Address

- Welcome: Alexandra Gheciu
- Speaker: Cesar Jaramillo

Dr. Alexandra Gheciu opened the conference with words of welcome and thanks. She pointed out that this conference was taking place in truly dangerous times and highlighted a few of the current concerns: the ongoing war in Ukraine, the heartbreaking conflict in the Middle East, the growing challenges associated with new technologies and AI, as well as what the upcoming results of the US election might bring.

Mr. Jaramillo painted a picture of the current state of our troubled world by giving a quick overview of each of the upcoming panels:

- The situation in Ukraine has brought us to the point of unprecedented nuclear risk. We are facing an existential question, what are we doing to stop it? How do we come back from the brink? (Panel 1).
- How do we handle advances in AI and other technologies? These can be helpful technologies but they are also being integrated into military systems - the future of warfare is the current warfare, these weapons are being tested now (Panel 2).
- When it comes to the future of peace operations, where should criticisms be directed? Will organizations adapt to a changing conflict environment? (Panel 3).
- Space is a strategic domain for military purposes, but also for social purposes and with economic benefits. The things that happen in space have geopolitical impacts here on earth. Can we craft a normative regime for space? (Panel 4).
- The arms trade was a free-for-all before 2014. In 2014, the world came up with a regime, however the practice has not met the promise, ten years on (Panel 5).
- Lastly, is the topic of re-energizing Canada's diplomacy. What's Canada going to do? What is Canada doing? We all want Canada to be a force for good (Panel 6).

Panel 1- "Nuclear Nightmares: How to Revive Arms Control & Disarmament"

- Moderator: Frank von Hippel
- Speakers: Cesar Jaramillo, Matt Korda

Matt Korda

Mr. Korda began by explaining that the major research output at the Federation of American Scientists is to produce the best non-classified estimates of global nuclear arsenals and trends. They do this using open sources, things like satellite imagery, Freedom of Information Act requests, budgetary information, treaty data, leaks, etc. This work is becoming more important as nuclear stockpiles are going up and countries are building up stockpiles in secret. He was asked to offer his thoughts about the new nuclear age in which we find ourselves, which he would say is characterized by two different kinds of instability. Arms race instability and crisis instability.

Arms race instability is driving countries to build up their arsenals, while crisis instability is making nuclear use more likely when tensions are high. These two types of instability are at their highest point since the end of the Cold War. Understanding why that is the case will help guide the discussion as we talk about how to reduce those risks.

First, arms race instability. All nine nuclear armed states are in the midst of extensive and expensive modernization campaigns. Some are increasing the sizes of their arsenals, some are increasing the quality or efficiency of their warheads, some are doing both. This is being driven by a collective embrace of "Great Power Competition". We're experiencing an action-reaction security dynamic that's going on between several nuclear armed countries. What do I mean by action-reaction? One illustration of this is the relationship between countries building defensive systems and then countries building offensive systems to circumvent those defences. Countries used to say that missile defenses were oriented just towards rogue states, and not against nuclear peers, in the hope that it would make these countries less likely to build up against each other. Now all of these lines are being blurred.

It's also important to recognize the inherent links between quite a powerful weapons industry and nuclear policy. What happens is that we will see quite a bit of mirror imaging between countries, even though for some countries, certain weapons may not make sense with their nuclear doctrine. For some countries it seems like the weapons are being built first and then the questions of how and when to use them are being asked second, which is usually not the way you want policy to go. These new programs are also able to be pursued because for the first time in more than 50 years, we are today effectively living in an era of no more great power arms control. When neither side (Russia/US) is complying to a treaty anymore, you default to worse case assumptions about what the other country is going to do. Without working treaties, legal limits or a mutual agreement to cap their forces, both the US and Russia could effectively double their deployed nuclear arsenals, perhaps in a year or two. The important thing is that the rush to rebuild would be really visible, we would be able to see that on satellite imagery. The pressure is on both sides to be able to build up quickly, but also try to convince the other that they are not out to seek superiority. That could raise real risks of potential preemption.

Second, crisis instability. This is present when, during a nuclear crisis, one or both countries perceive that it's in their interest to launch nuclear weapons first (ie. India and Pakistan). The potential for nuclear escalation gets even spicier when you factor in the growing phenomenon that nuclear armed states are increasingly entangling both their civilian and military infrastructures together, as well as their nuclear and non-nuclear infrastructures together (ie. Satellites). It's also impossible to disentangle the psychological and emotional states of nuclear armed leaders from nuclear politics, given that in many countries the power to launch nuclear weapons is imbued on a single individual. Deterrence theory has traditionally assumed that leaders are going to be rational and act in a way that is predictable and that we can expect. Is that still the case? We also have a lack of trusted crisis communication mechanisms.

WIth that context in mind, what can we do to reduce nuclear risks in the new nuclear age? We need to mitigate the drivers of these two different types of instability. To address arms control

instability it is critical that every country dedicates time and resources and empathizes with the security concerns of its future arms control partners. Chief among these concerns, is the development of advanced defensive systems and the perception that these systems are able to be directed at anyone, and that this is kind of an open-ended project. What if we were willing to put those limits on the table? In order to do this, states are going to have to sit down at the table together. A challenge is going to be to compartmentalize arms control and nuclear policy issues from all of these other security dynamics that are happening in the world. Nuclear armed countries should also consider establishing some kinds of checks and balances into nuclear launch authority in a crisis. It's imperative that these countries who are not talking to each other on a regular basis are able to talk to each other in the context of crises. To end on a positive note, what's clear is that there's a tremendous amount of public interest in nuclear risks.

Cesar Jaramillo

Mr. Jaramillo began by stating that we are in a very unstable time, that we are in the midst of active great power competition. It's important to differentiate between the immediate nuclear nightmare stemming from the situation in Ukraine, and the slightly broader nuclear nightmare of our inability as an international community to really craft a credible path to nuclear disarmament, of which there is none. Although related, these are slightly different matters which require a slightly different policy toolset from us. With the broader situation, it's perhaps more complex, multi-faceted, interrelated, multi-dimensional processes, while with Ukraine, it's just urgent measures. It's really recognizing which conditions might realistically lead to nuclear weapons being used. How do we avoid those circumstances?

He then focused his remarks more on the broader situation, our inability to get rid of nuclear weapons. First, there is no credible path to nuclear abolition. We are heading in the exact opposite direction. How do we deal with that? One is, entrench the norm against possession. We are not there. The norm should not only cover nuclear detonations, it must be sufficiently clear that possession in itself is a problem. The knowledge of their presence has an effect and informs policy and informs military strategy. Possession is highly conducive to instability. The second point is the centrality of what we call nuclear dependent states. Canada is firmly entrenched in that group. These are states that live in a certain duality. They present themselves as responsible international actors that have foregone nuclear weapons. However they overtly support nuclear deterrence policy and the indefinite possession of nuclear weapons by military alliances that they are party to and members of. Which is it? I think it will be very difficult to make progress in nuclear abolition without the involvement of nuclear dependent states. These states are enabling the nuclear armed states.

We have to pay attention to the machinery under which nuclear disarmament is happening or should happen or could happen. There is an erosion of trust and credibility in the key regimes, the key treaties, the key forums, the key venues. The Conference on Disarmament has produced virtually nothing in decades. What is supposed to be the key disarmament body in the world is dysfunctional, non-functional. The NPT is losing credibility as we speak. The machinery needs attention. These are key multilateral forums and venues and institutions that are simply not

working, so it's no surprise that the processes that are supposed to be unfolding under those regimes and institutions are not yielding any results. So I think that institutional support for that deficit is crucial. Lastly, conventional military spending is off the charts. It's just not credible that nuclear disarmament or abolition can ever be reached with this trend of conventional military spending. Nuclear weapons are a rough equalizer. Some states will always feel that temptation to have a nuclear arsenal as long as there are those pressures stemming from conventional military spending.

Discussion

Mr. Korda was asked to elaborate on his point about information management and adjusting processes. Mr. Korda explained that one significant challenge is the need to ensure that the information flows that get to the people who are making nuclear decisions are filled with correct and accurate information. He explained a simulation that took place at Princeton which looked at what a normal person would do during a nuclear crisis. The result of the simulation showed that all of the inputs that a president or person receives push you towards a nuclear launch. This is the system that we set up, it inherently biases you. It makes you act quickly and not ask questions. How can we put in place checks and balances? It's important to think about how we present information, to rethink the launching architecture.

A question was asked about how to negotiate nuclear disarmament with a state with a limited nuclear stockpile. Can an arms control regime be developed that demonstrates that it's in China's best interest to reduce their stockpile or will they see this as one-sided? Mr. Jaramillo highlighted that historically there is the assumption that the US and Russia bear a special responsibility because of the amount of nuclear weapons that they have. However, the need to engage China in that kind of strategic discussion is becoming increasingly clear. The New START treaty is crumbling. Parallel to that crumbling, it's time to start creating spaces for China to be part of that conversation. It doesn't make sense for China to be excluded. Mr. Korda added that because there is asymmetry between stockpiles, we need to get creative. Maybe that means we develop an asymmetric arms agreement, not revolving around parity.

A final question was posed asking the panelists their thoughts on the idea that nuclear weapons are obsolete. Mr. Jaramillo said he partially agreed but that he watched with worry as their relevance seemed to be growing with some players. He went back to the comments he made in his presentation that highlighted that they are already being used and affecting battlefields (ie. Ukraine), and that detonation is just one way they can be used.

Panel 2 - "Countering the Danger of Autonomous Weapons and Managing the AI Effect"

- Moderator: Nisha Shah
- Speakers: Branka Marijan, Alexandra Volokhova

Branka Marijan

Dr. Marijan began by talking about algorithmic warfare today. She started by saying that there is a swarming of regulatory discussions at international and national levels on AI for security and military uses, as well as on autonomous weapons. Yesterday, President Biden signed the first national security memorandum on AI technologies. The memorandum notes that like cyber weapons, AI tools cannot be counted or inventoried and everyday use can go awry, even without malicious intent. Algorithmic warfare aims to capture things that we're actually seeing on the battlefield which is indeed growing autonomy of weapon systems but also the use of AI for decision support systems. Decision support systems have gotten a lot more attention since their use in Gaza. These are systems that can acquire and generate target data. Combining the use in actual weapon systems and in decision support systems helps us understand that the issue of military uses of AI goes beyond just whatever we have in our imagination of what an autonomous weapon is but it indeed has broader implications for decision making.

Dr. Marijan made five key points, two of which were key trends shaping regulatory realities, and three of which were on governance processes that she wanted to bring attention to:

- We are all seeing testing and use of AI systems in contemporary conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East which is pushing these technologies onto the actual battlefields. The lessons that states are learning is 'small and many' (ie. AI enabled drones). These systems offer precise mass; countries no longer have to choose between precision and mass. For both smaller and larger states, these systems are acting as force multipliers. These systems bring a scale that we have not seen before.
- The push for Silicon Valley ethos for militaries. This is the 'move fast and break things'. This is the need for a startup culture to be infused into defence, particularly in the Western world. This has led to a growing role of tech companies in defence and as a response to the perception that China is outpacing the US in new technology. So the concern for this trend is that the push for Silicon Valley ethos particularly in the military sphere is an issue for humanitarian organizations. What we've seen with the deployment of these technologies is an incredible level of civilian harm.
- It's become a bit of a truism to say that AI technology is outpacing regulation but there is the very real reality of the fact that there's a lot of power at stake and a lot of military advantage and benefits that states are weighing. Three key processes are the UN CCW discussions on lethal autonomous weapon systems, the responsible military AI summits (REAIM), and the US political declaration on responsible military use of artificial intelligence and autonomy.

Given the significance of this technology and its impacts on warfare already, what we need are agreements at the international level that involve the greatest number of states. What's really making the regulatory discussions very challenging is that states are observing actual battlefields and seeing the utility of this technology and a lot of hype about the technology. And when placed against the background of the great power competition, the likelihood of achieving the regulations that we need at the international level that will make us much more secure globally is not very high.

Alexandra Volokhova

Ms. Volokhova began by elaborating a bit more on the applications of AI in the military. AI is really widespread in our civilian technologies but also in the military. It's not only autonomous weapons systems but it's also largely involved in informing decision makers. In general with any information analysis, it's very tempting to implement AI technologies. Speaking about

autonomous weapons systems, probably the usual picture which comes to mind when we mention these technologies is fighter drones or explosion drones but it is not only machines which are being developed together with AI for military purposes. There are multiple weapons of different scales, from small drones to huge submarines, in which AI is being deployed. For airborne forces it is mostly drones which have the capability to follow and fire different targets, including other systems and armed vehicles, but also human personnel. We have seen several of these examples deployed in Ukraine. Other systems include ground systems such as unmanned ground vehicles, as well as elect quadruped robots, which are believed to have better mobility in more complex terrains. They can either play assistance roles in logistics or they can perform the same tasks as drones, following and firing targets. Another area is naval forces, where there are submarines being developed. An important detail about naval systems is that there is huge interest in imposing even more autonomy in these systems.

A couple of words about combat and control applications of AI. Currently there is huge hype around large language models (ChatGPT) and military agencies are also interested in deploying them to recommend military decisions. Recent public studies indicate that large language models are more prone to recommending escalation tactics compared to expert humans and also, the underlying motivation and logic of the systems is not clear. AI has also been used for assisted targeting. The very scary trend is that people tend to really trust AI technologies without double checking the targets and decisions that AI suggests.

This is the picture, which is very scary. There are not enough conversations about the dark sides of the technologies. The problem Ms. Volokhova sees in the AI community is that they don't have enough education or ethical background, and given the impact that AI has on society, she believes that there should be mandatory training in ethics and politics for people who train in AI, which is not currently the case. There are still voices in the community saying that politics should be separate from the mathematics, from the pure technology and it is particularly heartbreaking seeing how AI is influencing human lives right now and exacerbating the horrors in the war. She personally would call for more collaboration between different fields, between the research community and the policymaking community. Also calling for responsibility, and maybe even sometimes some political stances, from the most renowned academic institutions.

Discussion

A question was asked about the panelists' sense of the appetite among state parties right now who are participating in discussions at the CCW to take it outside the CCW and to do for autonomous weapons what they have done for other weapon systems. Dr. Marijan answered by saying that she doesn't mean to defend the CCW by any means, but she does think it's served a very useful role, which is that it has been an incubator for this topic. However, there is a lack of political will. The CCW has stalled because too many states are comfortable letting disruptive states stall that process. The political will does not exist to take this issue outside of the CCW. A lot of states are not dedicating the capacity or resources to these regulatory processes.

A comment was made about Dr. Marijan's presentation providing a bleak perspective about what is happening in AI around the world, given that last year, in the UNGA, the first ever resolution was passed on autonomous weapons. Dr. Marijan answered by pointing out that if you look at that text, what the resolution essentially calls for is more dialogue. We need to expect more from these states. She said that maybe the reason her presentation looks bleak is that she was pushing for actual progress, actual commitment. The reason she's a bit concerned is that she doesn't think we're fully capturing the sense of urgency given the trends in warfare to move beyond just calls

for dialogue. She also expressed that a part of her role is to be a champion of the processes but it's also to step back analytically and say we need to do more because these trends are very real and impacting civilians as we speak.

One participant asked if the issue of AI and nuclear command and control come up in the governance processes that Dr. Marijan mentioned. They also asked on what sort of basis was the determination that there is trust in AI when it comes to nuclear command and control? Ms. Volokhova began by explaining that the comment about trust in AI comes from a study/war game scenario where the conclusion was that people tend to really trust the AI system without understanding why the system made a particular decision. It is a general trend in reliability that humans tend to have towards AI systems. The huge problem is that we cannot explicitly tell why a system proposed a particular decision. As well, she said that she doesn't think that a complete ban on any AI system could be achieved in nuclear weapons because AI algorithms can be used for image processing. It can be inside the software, so completely excluding AI from the whole system is unlikely to her but clarifying particular boundaries where AI should not be used could be more helpful in achieving some progress. Dr. Marijan said that the Blueprint endorsed at REAIM stated that there was a need to prevent AI from being used to proliferate weapons of mass destruction. The general understanding was that China did not necessarily share the view because of this sort of broader application of AI in the nuclear sphere, that there was some contention there. But she indicated that she thinks the contention goes beyond that point because of the competition between the US and China.

A question was asked about the challenges of offensive vs. defensive weaponry. The conversation usually goes to governance because the contradiction may not be resolvable on a technical level, but they did want to ask whether the panelists felt that that cost ratio was insurmountable or whether it really wasn't the point. Dr. Marijan responded by saying that her point was that we can't think about it like that. She thinks the challenge is that this leads to a very slippery slope. The issue with the small and many, your adversaries will adapt. Countries are thinking about these costs and that's leading to the push for development and use of these smaller systems. We need to speak to those arguments if we're calling for regulation. We need to be very clear what the benefits are of actually putting in place regulations.

Another participant asked Ms. Volokhova if anecdotally, or from her experience, do we have some sort of ethical dimension to these conversations? Is there a huge gap there? Ms. Volokhova replied that, yes, there is a huge gap. There are no mandatory trainings at universities. There are some initiatives by different universities who see the need for developing these trainings, but they are not mandatory. There is not enough political will to make these things mandatory. The field is very dominated by a corporate mindset because of the funding from big tech, big corporations, and the majority of people are oriented towards this market. Ethical discussions are there in the community but she wouldn't say that everyone has a good understanding of the ethics and the importance of that, as well as the politics. She would also say that the majority of the community tries to stay away from the politics. She thinks that academic communities, university communities, should really take the education of students in this field seriously.

A participant wondered if the issue was not with education but if something was fundamentally wrong with our value system. He asked a clarifying question about explainability and Ms. Volokhova responded by saying that it is a known problem in AI research and there is a whole direction of research which is dedicated towards explainability of the neural networks and their decisions and outputs. Unfortunately, so far, there is quite limited progress on explaining the decisions of neural networks. We know how they work mathematically pretty well, but explaining in the high level abstractions why a particular decision was made is still very

challenging. The solution to that would be moving towards different sorts of systems which are based on more explainable abstractions. In this domain there is not yet as much progress as with neural networks. The participant also asked about putting value systems into AI, which Ms. Volokhova answered by saying that she thinks it requires collaboration between fields. She doesn't think that AI researchers have enough background to define these values that AI should be aligned with. There is a whole direction as well which is called AI alignment where researchers are trying to find ways to align decisions and actions which the AI system makes with some values. But she would say that this field is not yet that developed. Dr. Marijan added that some of the technical solutions to explainability that this whole field is working on are at best approximations and that might be acceptable in some contexts but in a military context what we need is a degree of explainability for the basic fact that we need to understand who to hold accountable for exposed accountability. The thing about values and ethics, what's happening a lot in international discussion that shes noticed, on ethics and military AI, is that there is this sense that we can put in a checklist, that we can instruct the systems based on existing, for example, international humanitarian laws, but so much of decision making warfare is based on context. We haven't built systems that don't hallucinate, we haven't figured out the problem of alignment. But even if we do, if at some point we perfect all of this technically, there is still a question of, should these systems be making life and death decisions? In her view, that's a no.

Panel 3 - "Constructing the Future of UN Peace Operations"

- Moderator: Paul Meyer
- Speakers: Walter Dorn, Peggy Mason

Peggy Mason

Ms. Mason began by saying that her overall message was that UN peace operations are indispensable tools for helping resolve conflict but they run into trouble due to the increasing complexity of conflict and the Security Council mandate straying from some of the hard learned lessons and the fundamentals of peacekeeping. There has been a lot of effort to try to help UN peace operations adapt. Canada can play a role in that, however, the precondition for that is re-engaging fully in UN peacekeeping. Despite the paralysis in the UNSC on so many issues, due to the Ukraine conflict and other serious P5 disagreements, nonetheless UN peacekeeping mandates have been renewed, with even a new police mission in Haiti created. This is not to say that divisions among the P5 are not hampering operations but the fact that they are cooperating at all on these, this is surely a testament to the value they see in UN peace operations, the value of this instrument for international peace and security.

Peace-building is a complex long-term process of helping the conflicting parties to create the necessary conditions for sustainable peace. At the center of this effort is the peace process. Complex political problems lie at the heart of violent conflict and require political solutions, negotiated and agreed to by the parties. A robust security element may be essential in both the negotiation and implementation phases but it is a supporting element nonetheless. There is a lot of empirical evidence that shows how useless military force really is when it comes to ending violent conflict.

With the primacy of the peace process in mind, starting in the late 90s international

peacekeeping operations were called upon, not only to keep the peace, but to facilitate the political process and to support the establishment of legitimate and effective institutions of governance. For a collective enterprise of this magnitude to succeed the international effort must be perceived as legitimate and impartial by all or most of the parties to the conflict and it must have the broadest possible international support with a coherent legal and operational framework. Only the UNSC can mandate such an operation and only the UN organization can even notionally lead it. The very structure of a UN peacekeeping operation reflects the centrality of the peace process. This stands in sharp contrast to NATO led missions. NATO is not an alternative to this, it does not have the political element in its missions.

Expert level studies have identified two key problems for UN missions. The first one is the Security Council's failure to support the primacy of politics, the centrality of the peace process. The second problem is the terrible strain that has been put on the core principles of UN peace operations which underpin all of their work. That is: consent of the parties to the mission, at least at the strategic level; impartiality of the mission; and the limited use of force to the extent possible. Those are two huge problems but The Pact for the Future has at least zeroed in on the issue that the Security Council has to start making sure that the mandates put the peace process at the center. The other important thing that The Pact does is that it calls on the Secretary General to do a review of UN peace operations and that is very important.

Walter Dorn

Internationally there have been no new UN peacekeeping operations since 2015. We went from a high of 104,000 UN peacekeepers deployed in 2015 to 61,000 currently. The UN Secretary General is not a fan of peacekeeping and Dr. Dorn only discovered that over years of speaking with people who are close to him. He's the only Secretary General not to have created a new peacekeeping operation. When Dr. Dorn looks at the picture today, he sees the East-West divide being there, and that part of the battle is actually in Africa, back to the Cold War with proxies in Africa. The Security Council is playing a lot of political games but they still are the most important forum where those great powers can talk.

Let's have a look at what the future could be. He see a huge need for peacekeeping in so many areas of the world, ie. Sudan, Haiti, Libya, Ukraine, Gaza. Another thing that he can see now is consolidation, which they are doing on doctrines, manuals, lots of training and technologies. In the longer term, we need the UN to be able to create its own standby forces. We need to increase the standing police capacity that the UN has of police ready to be deployed. That brings him to his last area, which is Canada. Our numbers are at an all time low. There is one positive element that Canada did innovate, and that is that we provide multi-mission support with a C130 to different missions in Africa, they go for 15 days every 3 months. We proposed and offered to the UN a quick reaction force, in 2017. It hasn't been deployed yet. Peacekeeping is one of our distinct contributions to the world and we are letting it down.

Discussion

A participant said that he has noticed a much larger contribution by Canada in terms of actual troop deployment in NATO, that it seems like we have put our eggs towards the basket of building NATO and military alliances. Why have we shifted so far away from our peacekeeping ethos? Dr. Dorn listed some of the possible suspects: the military (who much prefer to work within NATO, the UN complicates their life), politicians (there have been 3 elections with a promise to re-engage and instead we've gone to an all-time low), the UN (they haven't created any new missions so the total number is going down), and our Allies.

A question was asked about the options for Gaza and Israel and how to get consent of the parties. Dr. Dorn began by pointing out that Israel doesn't have an end game right now because they just want to do the whacking but they need to have an end game and the US realizes they don't have an end game. When it comes to an end game, what other end game would there be except for impartial stability forces? Israel doesn't want to occupy for a long time, and you can't allow a non-democratic Gazan force to be there because it's a threat to Israel, so you need to be able to have some sort of peacekeeping force that provides stability and helps rebuild Gaza. Ms. Mason said that Israel has made their end game very clear - Greater Israel. The proposal that she is putting forward is a UN transitional administration for Palestine, for all of the occupied territory. It would have a mandate to provide interim governance and security throughout the occupied Palestinian territory while building local capacity for self-governance in preparation for free and fair elections. In regards to the consent issue, Israel is not going to agree to this until it has no other option but to consent to this.

One participant commented that the UN was not viewed as helpful or useful in some contexts, using the example of Afghanistan. He then asked how academic seminars and universities could help the UN to redefine its function or reorganize its structure to be meaningful, useful and functional in international relations in this era? Dr. Dorn pointed out that the UN assistance mission in Afghanistan is the only game in town now. After NATO countries invested over a trillion dollars in Afghanistan and generations of Western soldiers had rotated into Afghanistan, what do we have to show for a NATO presence? It's completely gone. The UN didn't abandon them. It's very constrained by the government of Afghanistan, by the Taliban, but it is an important element. It's the voice where you can tell the Taliban right and wrong, where you can try to work with the little bit of room that you have.

Another participant asked Dr. Dorn if he could identify a core reason why UN peacekeeping has fallen off. Dr. Dorn said that in Sudan and Libya's case, the problem is with the conflicting parties. They don't want a peacekeeping force. But behind that are powers that aren't putting enough influence in order to force them to the negotiating table. The Russians are using this for opportunities for building connections into Africa and sometimes playing both sides of the street. But the UN could still play a role in mediation.

Panel 4 - "How to Prevent War in Space"

- Moderator: Cesar Jaramillo
- Speaker: Paul Meyer

Paul Meyer

Mr. Meyer began by saying that he titled his talk "The UN and space security: a tale of two OEWGs (Open-Ended Working Group)" as it recalled Dickens' "A Tale of Two Cities" and its opening lines: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times". When you look at the outer space realm, we are experiencing very positive developments alongside very detrimental ones. On the positive side of the ledger, the world is benefiting enormously from an ever increasing array of space enabled services, from telecommunications, to broadband internet connectivity, to ever more precise remote sensing applications. Unlike previous eras, this growth in capacity is being driven by the private sector (e.g. SpaceX). The increased use of space raises questions

about how it is to be governed and secured. We have a foundational treaty from 1967, the *Outer Space Treaty* with 115 state parties. It sets up a special status for outer space, a status of a global common. The founders of the *Outer Space Treaty* were making a significant effort at conflict prevention. Coupled with that is the explicit injunction that space activity should be for peaceful purposes and "in the interest and for the benefit of all countries". The will of the states, the members of the UN, is fairly clear in regards to the concept of the prevention of an arms race in outer space (PAROS). This, as an objective of the international community, has been reaffirmed on an annual basis through a resolution at the UNGA, adopted with near universal support. This resolution notes the grave threat to international security posed by an arms race in outer space and calls for the negotiation of "further measures" to strengthen the existing legal regime and make it more effective. However, there is little agreement on what form these "further measures" should take.

The division of opinion has been largely on an East-West basis with Russia and China leading one camp and the US and partners leading another. Briefly, the Sino-Russian position favours a legally binding treaty that would prohibit the placement of weapons in outer space and the threat or use of force against space objects. A draft of this treaty has been on the table at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva since 2008, with a revised version presented in 2014. The US and some its allies believe that this is the wrong avenue to pursue at this stage. What would be preferable in their estimation is a series of politically binding versus legally binding measures, under the rubric of transparency and confidence building measures. They've criticized the Sino-Russian draft for a number of reasons. Firstly, they object to the definition of a "space weapon". Secondly, they criticize the lack of verification provisions. Verification is often seen as an essential feature of an international security agreement, but the Chinese and Russian delegations do not dispute this, but suggest that a verification protocol could be developed at a later stage.t. And finally, the US thinks that the draft treaty ignores the threat posed by terrestrial anti-satellite weapons (ASATs). The Chinese and Russian rebuttal to that critique is that since the treaty prohibits the threat or use of force against a space object that would then render any attack from the ground against a space object a prohibited activity. Procedurally, their determination to keep consideration of the draft treaty within the confines of the Conference on Disarmament (a curious and problematic diplomatic posture given the paralysis of the Conference) has excluded the possibility of making progress on it.

The mention of ASATs starts to bring up the negative developments of the last few years. Part of this is the resumption of anti-satellite weapon testing. We had a rude reminder that this capability had not disappeared from the militaries of the world when China conducted a destructive anti-satellite weapon test against a defunct satellite of its own in 2007. Next year, maybe as a reminder that this capability is not unique to the Chinese, the US brought down a re-entering satellite of its own using a ballistic missile defence interceptor. Keen not to fall behind, we had India conducting an anti-satellite weapon test in 2019 and most recently the Russian Federation, in November 2021, . Each of those tests, to a lesser or greater degree, created space debris.

You may not be aware that space debris or space junk is already a serious problem with approximately 40,000 pieces of trackable debris currently in orbit. Further destructive ASAT testing would only exacerbate the existing problem and pose a threat to safe operations in space, especially in the busy Low Earth Orbit. The resumption of the ASAT testing coincides with the deterioration of relations between the leading space powers, namely the US, China and Russia. It has generated sharp accusations that the other side is bent on weaponizing outer space.

The pendulum at the UN seems to swing back and forth between positive and negative results. Now we have a new diplomatic vehicle - the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG). It's open to

any UN member that wants to participate and its proceedings are public. The UK came up with the idea of an OEWG on "Reducing Space Threats through rules, norms and principles of responsible state behaviour" in outer space. This approach had a focus on conduct rather than hardware. In this working group, which operated between 2022 and 2023, a vibrant and positive atmosphere reigned. But alas it fell afoul to acts of diplomatic sabotage undertaken by the Russian Federation with its delegation not just being content with denying any substantive report emerging from the group but went so far as to block the acceptance of the normal and very anodyne procedural report. This conduct was a manifestation of an animus on the part of Moscow that is plaguing prospects for moving forward.

This unpromising backdrop was further exacerbated at the UNGA last fall when two competing resolutions on space security follow-up were put forward and adopted, authorizing not one but two new OEWGs. One that would operate in the 2025-2026 time frame and was essentially a continuation of the previous working group (supported by the US and its partners), while the other was a working group with a four year mandate, running from 2025 to 2028, pursuing the same subject matter (supported by China and Russia). Evidently this will not help policy coherence at the UN, and it will not assist the UN in managing its limited resources. This competition augurs poorly for any agreement in the near term to enhance the security situation in outer space. The question remains: will international cooperation be able to prevent the introduction of man made threats to outer space, in addition to the existing natural hazards to space operations?

Mr. Meyer would like to think that a degree of rationality which will allow some consolidation rather than duplication of the two processes. Mr. Meyer said that if he had to project a probable future course for space security diplomacy at the international level it would probably be more of the same. A mix of competing diplomatic processes more geared to its members scoring debating points against adversaries rather than seeking compromises and the common ground necessary to support practical measures. As in other spheres of human activity, it may require the outer space equivalent of a train wreck to propel states to set aside their differences sufficiently to allow agreement on cooperative security measures and sustain the fragile environment of outer space for peaceful purposes.

Discussion

Mr. Jaramillo began the discussion period by asking Mr. Meyer if he could give everyone a snapshot of Canada's engagement on this file. Mr. Meyer began by highlighting that the department at GAC that was previously called the arms control and disarmament division is now the arms control disarmament and space division, so a least in the world of organization charts and nomenclature, there has been a little increase in the profile of space affairs. He thinks that the Canadian position is supportive of moving ahead with practical measures and that it aligns more, at this stage, with support for transparency and confidence building measures as the most feasible. However, Canada acknowledges that the legally binding instruments may have a role to play at some future time. Mr. Meyer expressed hope that Canada could play an even more active role in trying to transcend some of these cleavages that have emerged. Another participant referenced a new report regarding commercial activities that are expanding very rapidly and noted the fact that the commercial sector is willing to provide small and micro launcher projects. Mr. Meyer responded by saying that commercial activity is dynamic and extensive and the general challenge is for regulators to keep up with what industry is doing. The recent saliency of private sector involvement in conflict is an area of some sensitivity. He fears that it could be an exacerbating problem . Do private companies cross a red line in becoming active belligerents or supporting belligerents in a conflict?

A question was asked about the reasons for the failure of a process that the EU led over 10 years, to try to negotiate an international code of conduct on the peaceful uses of outer space. Despite that failure, is there a model for finding a roadmap for managing this outside of the UN? Mr. Meyer suggested two principal reasons for why this proposed Code failed. One was the 'made in Brussels' label. The EU took a hub and spoke approach to consultations. There were also perils inherent in going outside the UN, in losing the legitimacy afforded by the universal body. Often states don't want to adhere to commitments that they feel they did not have an equitable influence or voice in shaping. The other reason was diplomatic fumbling. Basically, the EU external action service had difficulties managing this initiative. The service went through personnel changes, there were long periods when no consultations were held, and then there was an ill-advised effort to steamroll acceptance of the Code through a multilateral meeting. This tactic didn't work as the BRICS countries in particular said that if there was going to be a code of conduct it was going to have to be negotiated at the UN under a consensus mandate.

A participant asked: If Donald Trump wins the US election and Canada is asked to join the US ballistic missile defence project again, and if Pierre Poilievre is the Prime Minister, will we say no again? While he didn't know the likely response it should be recalled that the opposition to engaging with BMD wasn't only a decision of the Martin government, it was also the position of the Mulroney and Chretien governments. The decision to stand aloof from participation was linked to the emphasis the Canadian government placed at the time on ensuring the non-weaponization of outer space. It was feared that some of the enthusiasts for missile defence in the US were also talking about deploying space-based interceptors and we didn't want to see that occur. One can't deny the fundamental relationship between offence and defence, and the inclusion of missile defences has complicated bilateral efforts at arriving at strategic forces reduction agreements.

A question was asked regarding ICBMs: It seems that ICBMs, by their basic mode of operation follow at least a sub-orbital trajectory. Is there any functional or strategic advantage to having a weapons platform in space as opposed to close to space? Mr. Meyer replied that an ICBMs trajectory does go through space. In the efforts at ballistic missile defence, you'll see references to midcourse interception and what they mean by "midcourse" is, when the missile reentry vehicle is in outer space. One would think that the problem in identifying a warhead in outer space, along with the costs and the physical obstacles to mounting weapon systems in outer space, would have discouraged pursuit of space weapons long ago.. But this project comes up every so often as if the military wants to claim the high ground, and of course there's no higher ground than outer space. A participant suggested that chaos would be rampant if some of these satellites that we rely on were to crash into each other. Where is the corporate world on this risk? Mr. Meyer pointed out that we have to rely on the self-interest of the private actors. They have big investments in these assets and they want to preserve them. There is an organization called the Space Data Association, basically an association of operators and owners of satellites, and they would prefer to keep the government far away from us. The association promotes cooperation among its members which will yield more accurate conjunctural analysis for collision avoidance than they could receive from governmental sources.

Panel 5 - "Curtailing the Global Arms Trade and Promoting Common Security"

- Moderator: Peggy Mason
- Speakers: Robin Collins, Alex Neve

Alex Neve

Mr. Neve started by focusing on lives and how they are impacted by the Arms Trade Treaty. He explained that his first encounter interviewing the survivors of wide-spread and indiscriminate bombardment, and then later documenting the weapons and ammunition that had rained down on their homes, was in remote villages across eastern Chad, along the border with Sudan's Darfur region, back in 2006. The deaths, the injuries, the destruction were numbingly awful. Mr. Neve proceeded to share numerous examples of his experiences since then, highlighting the real human cost. He talked about looking for the writing, the numbers, the symbols, that would confirm what was already abundantly clear - that these tools of death came from the US, from Russia, from China, from Israel, Germany, Ukraine, France, Belgium, Turkey, Spain, from so many countries. The dystopian reality is that in none of those places did any of the arms and weapons used to kill, main, terrorize, and destroy, come from production lines in that country. Rather they all came from other corners of the world. They were sold, brokered, transferred, smuggled, stolen, shipped or just handed over to militaries, governments, armed groups, terrorist cells and other groups and forces for whom the safety of civilians was not only not a concern, but more often than not, a brutal callous deliberate tactic. Nothing could be a more visceral indictment of the global arms trade. And nothing more powerfully made the case for why an arms trade treaty was so desperately needed. He was often asked by survivors and neighbours, what would it take to make it stop? He would meet with local groups who were focused on doing something about the deadly impact of those arms and weapons in their country and what they all were essentially looking for were rules, simple rules that would keep those arms out of the hands of forces intent on committing those atrocities against them and their loved ones.

And their plea was heard, and their demand prevailed. Their demand prevailed, in theory. On April 2nd, 2013, the arms trade treaty was adopted overwhelmingly by the UNGA. 154 states, including Canada (without much enthusiasm or leadership), voted in favour. Those voting in favour at the time included a number of key arms producing and transferring countries. Even the US voted yes. Russia and China both abstained. Within 18 months, 50 states had ratified the treaty and 90 days later, December 24th, 2014, it entered into force. We're on the cusp of a decade now. This was not Canada's proudest moment. Canada was not among the first 50 states party, we were not even among the first 100 states to become party to the ATT. We didn't do so until June 19th, 2019, over 6 years after the treaty had opened for signature. At the time, Stephen Harper's government clearly made a decision that there was more political advantage to staying out of the treaty, and taking groundless pot shots at it, than showing some meaningful international leadership. 11 years since the ATT was opened for signature, there are now 116 states party. The most recent came last week, with Colombia now on board. The US and Israel, perhaps surprisingly, have actually signed the treaty, but not ratified it. China is a party, Russia is not.

The heart of the treaty lies in article 6 and 7. Article 6 is an absolute prohibition on arms transfers in certain circumstances and that includes when the state doing the transferring has knowledge that the weapons or arms would be used to commit genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes. Article 7 obliges a state to "assess the potential that the arms could, among other concerns, be used to commit serious violations of international humanitarian law or international human rights law". Then considering that potential, alongside any mitigating measures that might reduce the risk, if it is determined that there is an overriding risk of serious violations the transfer is to be prohibited. Notably, states are also directed to pay particular

attention to the potential that the arms may be used to commit serious acts of gender-based violence or serious acts of violence against women and children.

Canada, in 2019, alongside becoming a party, amended its Export and Import Permits Act to ensure compliance with these ATT obligations. The key question is, how are we doing? For years, the litmus test has been Canada's multibillion dollar deal to sell armoured vehicles to Saudi Arabia. Human rights groups, UN experts, and legal scholars, have been opposed to arms transfers from any country, to the Saudis because of Saudi Arabia's role in the civil war in Yemen, and clear documented proof that Saudi coalition forces were repeatedly responsible for widespread war crimes in Yemen. The contract, announced in 2013, constitutes the largest arms deal in Canadian history. $14 billion dollars in value for the sale of 742 armoured vehicles, 652 of which have been transferred to date, including 40 last year. By any measure, this deal should not have been allowed to proceed, certainly once Canada was bound by the ATT. Instead, it has been business as usual, with a host of excuses, including the value of the direct and spin-off jobs created at the General Dynamics plant in London, Ontario; or the excessive financial penalty for cancelling the contract; or the importance of countries knowing that a contract with Canada would always be honoured. Apparently, that's more important than countries knowing that Canada will always honour its treaty obligations. Or Canada's geopolitical and security relationships with Saudi Arabia. Or the fact that there had not yet been any direct evidence of a General Dynamics armoured vehicle manufactured under that exact specific contract being used to commit violations on the ground in Yemen. None of that changes that there is clearly authoritative evidence of a substantial risk which has not been mitigated, that the armoured vehicles transferred to Saudi Arabia would be used to commit serious humanitarian and human rights law violations. It is hard to categorize this therefore as anything other than a blatant failure to live up to our ATT obligations. Mr. Neve then gave two other examples, one involving Turkey and Canadian made surveillance and targeting sensors used to guide smart munitions; and one regarding the sale of arms from Canada to Israel.

The other problem arises from what is often termed the US loophole in Canada's arms regime. On average, there are around $2 billion worth of Canadian arms transfers to the US every year, mostly parts and components which are then assembled into weapons and arms in the US. And that's around 50% of Canada's arms sales, but they are exempted from the export regime which assesses and upholds our ATT obligations. Notably, last month, Minister Joly did announce that the government was suspending a contract by which the Quebec division of the US company General Dynamics would be supplying ammunition that would go through the US and onto Israel. Thumbs up for that.

Where to now? We just marked, last month, the 5th anniversary of Canada's accession to the Arms Trade Treaty and those statutory reforms that supposedly were enacted to implement our obligations under the Treaty. The track record since, just considering that combination of Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Israel and the US, is not particularly impressive. And of course, the common thread there is that when it's about allies and when other geopolitical imperatives are in the frame, the ATT just seems to fade into the background. With all four countries, the case for why permits either remain in force or were restored, is flawed and problematic and flies in the face of documented evidence from the ground. Mr. Neve suggests that it is time for a thorough review of the state of Canada's ATT compliance, five years on. Let's think about the political context - obviously the best chance of doing so would be now, before any possible change in government. It could be taken up by a parliamentary committee, it could perhaps be taken up by the government appointing an independent expert group of some kind to carry out a review. The bottom line is that we can, and we must, do better.

Robin Collins

Mr. Collins began by saying that he subtitled his presentation with the question, Can we eliminate nuclear weapons while retaining our current competitive security arrangements? The Palme Commission in 1982 proposed a new security concept in its report, Common Security: A Program for Disarmament. It was stated briefly this way: All states, even the most powerful, are dependent in the end upon the good sense and restraint of other nations. Even ideological and political opponents have a shared interest in survival. 40 years later, in 2022, the updated Common Security report, For our Shared Future, distinguished itself from the original with references to what has changed in four decades. They said more attention should be given to technological change, including space and autonomous weapons and hypersonic missiles, to climate change, to gender equality issues and to broader involvement of civil society. While acknowledging these modest adjustments, the earlier 1982 program was the more significant in my opinion, and the breakthrough statement.

To start, Mr. Collins began with four points and important clarifications about common security. One, common security is not in itself a pacifist project. While it inclines us towards the reduction of violence and to limits in use of force, the guidance is still international law, and therefore there is also enforcement. But the priority is the prevention of war and violence, through conflict mediation measures such as diplomacy, ending threatening postures and pressing for arms reduction. Therefore, it is also true to say that the focus is on peaceful measures that reduce and undermine conflict. This is peace advocacy, if not pacifism. Secondly, common security is not a destination but a process and a practice. We do not need a fully-fledged common security framework in place to remove certain categories of weapons or to change provocative defence postures. The global systems we move through over time will inherently be imperfect and there will be relapses and backsliding.

Thirdly, the end of capitalism is not a prerequisite. An essential assumption of common security is that it can develop despite economic and political system differences, even while reduction of global poverty is a goal. If we must wait for an agreeable perfect future system, we will be waiting in vain, and more time will pass than we can afford, to address our global crises. Things can move quickly or slowly, but we will need to take sequential steps. Common security is very much a child of the Cold War and was originally designed to reduce the risk of conflict and nuclear war between the US and the Soviet Union. That is why, with the end of the Cold War, the term, if not the practice of common security, seemed to disappear from diplomacy. This is also why some ideas of the 1980s have resurfaced now, due to rising tensions. The essential elements were never dependent on Cold War contention. Rather they are, and were, rational, arguably neorealist, timeless ideas pertaining to conflict resolution, preventing war, including nuclear war, and arms control and disarmament.

Fourth: Balance, stability and détente, are not in themselves common security. They are elements of it, but they are not it. The actual goal of deterrence, it might be argued, is to perfect the stability of the stalemate existing in competitive security and not to replace it. Because science and technology inevitably march forward, systems and weapons will need perpetual modernizing by all sides. Deterrence theory can erroneously presuppose that failures won't happen that could disrupt the stability. Nuclear and conventional deterrence therefore would only be modulated in a way to strengthen, and thus reinforce the security dilemma. Even if nuclear deterrence were stable for a time, it cannot be coherent as a sustainable or sufficient basis for common security. Treaties and agreements are beneficial, parity rather than lopsidedness can help. But in practice, as we've seen, the balance of power, stability, parity and détente are temporary, unstable and unsustainable, even if we acknowledge that being more stable is better than being unstable.

We're stuck with the reasonable expectation that nation states will still want to protect themselves with weapons and military capabilities, and ideally, those resources are kept limited and non-threatening to other states. Even to get to that modest, safer stage, we will need a transition strategy with clear steps. So what happened to the post-Cold War "peace dividend"? It seems clear the complacency and "Western" hubris that followed the end of the Cold War led to disinterest in the ideas brought forward by 1980s common security advocates. How do we get to common security, non-provocative and non-offensive defence? Common security cannot be substituted for that of nuclear deterrence in a single sweep. It might instead start with the exchange of information and end with quantitative arms limitations and eventual cuts in the common interest. A complication is that confidence building requires transparency but security requires secrecy.

Non-offensive defence's two core assumptions are, first, that we distinguish offensive from defensive formations and postures, not necessarily weapon types but where they're placed and how they look to rivals. As well, defense is generally inherently stronger than offense because of specialization and the advantages of advanced preparations.

We should also distinguish strategic from peripheral weapons. The latter are weapons that are either seen to have limited utility for strategic deterrence or in war fighting, and which can be removed from arsenals relatively quickly. We don't know if there exists a definitive future common security in which complete and general disarmament will reign, but that remains the admirable goal we aim for.

To conclude, this disarmament and common security relationship is certainly a challenge, and one that takes leadership and persistent political nerve. Perhaps there is a dearth of both presently. Civil society has a recognized role in the transition, therefore. To realize our goals we must rely primarily on fact-based information, not just passion, and collate a comprehensive understanding of security, while also keeping our eyes on the prize of a more peaceful world. Most critically, we need to do a better job of twinning the objectives of disarmament and common security if we hope to be successful in fulfilling either.

Discussion

Since Canada ratified the ATT, is there a mechanism which would allow civil society and non-governmental organizations to have a legal case or in some other way push for compliance? Mr. Neve responded that that is not a straightforward possibility in Canada, but it is a possibility. Recently, in the case of Israel, there have been indications to the government of the intention to launch lawsuits or actually some legal action that has commenced. There's not a great track record in Canada of using the courts successfully to challenge arms transfer concerns.

How consistent is the project of common security? How is that compatible with the posture of NATO as we see it today? Isn't NATO a huge part of the problem we're facing in our common struggle for a more peaceful world? Mr. Collins said that many of the postures of NATO are incompatible with common security. The alliance was established with deterrence as its main vehicle for security, with little focus on non-provocation. On the other hand, much of what the OSCE does, virtually all of it, is compatible with common security. A different way of approaching your question is to say, what do you do about the fact that NATO doesn't have a common security agenda? You can assure that your own country is pushing the right buttons within NATO and, for instance, calling on NATO to replace its nuclear weapons policy, to support no first use, there's all these sorts of things that could be done to modify and change policy. NATO isn't really the issue. NATO is what happens when you don't have common security.

A questioner asked about whether economics really was unimportant to a security transition? Mr. Collins said that the designers of the common security concept made a major point which was that your economic or political system is not the point of adopting common security. It's about states and systems that disagree, nevertheless sitting down to resolve security questions. But common security actually has the alleviation of global poverty as one of its elements, so it’s not as if it doesn’t care about economics, it’s just that the economic system you reside in is not an impediment to your state and my state sitting down together to find out how we can become less provocative and that our securities are not damaging the securities of the other.

What are your thoughts on whether common security frameworks effectively address contemporary global conflicts if they don’t confront the historical injustices that have left former colonies economically marginalized and relying on militarization? Ms. Mason said, the answer is yes, it does address issues of reparative justice. Mr. Collins noted also that there can still be debates about the implementation of restorative justice approaches, as there were in South Africa after apartheid.

Panel 6 - “Re-energizing Canada’s Security Diplomacy”

- Moderator: Alexandra Gheciu
- Speakers: Jen Pedersen, Michael Manulak

Jen Pedersen

Dr. Pedersen indicated that she wanted to talk about what they’ve seen in the parliamentary context, especially over the last year on a number of the issues that had been discussed, and how, in her view, it’s not that encouraging, despite their efforts. What is encouraging is the people power. What’s not so encouraging is the way the government has been approaching a number of these different issues. A year ago, Minister Joly gave her pragmatic diplomacy speech, in which she said that even in crisis there are principles, even in war there are rules, and Canada will always defend our values, but frankly that is not happening. This whole last year has not been Canada’s proudest moment. I can tell you that the parliament that we’re in now, and the political context, is very different from 10 years ago or 20 years ago, when there were folks who were advocating for disarmament and for multilateralism, that’s not what she is seeing now. There’s a lot less trust among the parties and there’s less appetite for these kinds of conversations about Canada’s future.

Especially in the last year, since the terrible attacks of October 7th and the beginning of the war in Gaza, we have all witnessed the erosion of the rules-based international order. And while Canada over recent years has risen to the challenge in some cases, like in the war in Ukraine, it has not been the same case for Israel-Palestine, or for that matter, the recent war in Lebanon. In a lot of ways, we are starting to see a war on the UN globally, with a lot of the authoritarian forces, but also for example in Lebanon with attacks on UN peacekeepers by one of Canada’s supposedly strongest allies. This is inexcusable and Canada’s response to this has been relatively muted.

What we’re talking about today is very much about political will. Canadians are watching this parliament very closely, and are telling us that what they are seeing is a very difficult, and heartbreaking, double standard. The government, they tell us, is dehumanizing Arab, Muslim,

Lebanese and Palestinian life. What they're feeling is deep disappointment in Canada's failure to hold their lives as important as others. We're also seeing this standard applied to international justice. These choices are sending a clear message to Canadians that our global values are only currently applied selectively. And there is a diplomatic cost to this. Former ambassador Louise Blais, in her testimony to the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, said that one of the factors for why Canada lost its bid for a UN Security Council seat is because of our position on Palestine. When the Minister talks about defending our values, we need to start asking, well what values are those today?

I am seeing Canadians pay attention to these global crises more than ever this year. They are directly affected by these global crises in a way that they have not expressed before and they are doing a lot of lobbying and a lot of advocacy. Not just from the affected communities but from Canadians who really want to see a specific kind of foreign policy represented, the kind of foreign policy that they want to believe in. And I think this is a really good thing, it is pushing some members of parliament forward. It is certainly pushing the government forward in some cases. One of the things I wanted to make clear is that the decision making is not being made at Global Affairs, it's not being made by subject-matter experts, it's being made at the PMO and it's being made for political reasons. It used to be that foreign policy wasn't a motivating factor at the ballot box but I think increasingly we are seeing that it is. What's happening "over there", so to speak, is now far more important to Canadians here. They're scared and they're frustrated.

I want to talk about a few of the decisions that the Canadian government could make today, without any kind of parliamentary conversation, without a vote, that doesn't need a debate, that doesn't need to come to committee. One would be to finally accede to the Nuclear Ban Treaty. Another would be to immediately recognize the state of Palestine. We don't really know what's coming (in terms of the next government). As a disarmament community, we need to be thinking about what we're going to do over the next four years when there is less opportunity in the Canadian Parliament to have these conversations. The Conservatives will do what they said they will. They are honest and they are very clear about their priorities. One idea Dr. Pedersen has been thinking about, in terms of the future, is divestment. Divestment from either the Canadian Pension Plan or other investment companies. The fact is that we are all collectively benefiting from these arms sales and the arms manufacturing in Canada. I think there's a lot of opportunity here for us to start working with like-minded groups, including World BEYOND War, and talking a little bit about how we can do some of this important work outside of a government lobbying or parliamentary context. Because the next four years are going to be hard, and there might not be a lot of victories, so let's start looking elsewhere and see what we can do together.

Michael Manulak

Dr. Manulak began by highlighting that the title of the panel was "Re-energizing Canada's Security Diplomacy", which implied two things. One, that Canada's security diplomacy is in need of energy. And secondly, that it was more energetic in the past. He said that he believes that we are living through the most consequential transformation of the international security environment that we've seen since the end of the second World War. These are very much big picture times. Perhaps we're moving towards a multi-polar system. More importantly, we've seen a real change in the US role in the world, as they are bearing the burden of global leadership with increasing reluctance and this is leading to real questions about credibility. We've seen an increasing tendency of countries to cluster together in groupings of like-minded actors, ie. the G7, NATO. The role of the global south is also changing in this context. Its role is increasingly to confer legitimacy on the various projects of the global east and west in this competition, engaging in narrative politics, particularly in the UNGA. The other implication is the challenge

of working through international institutions and making multilateral institutions work, challenges to the international legal foundations and international humanitarian law. All of these things are having huge implications. And we may be moving to a world where big power politics are increasingly taking over the rules-based international order, and the implications for Canada are really significant.

So where has Canada's international security diplomacy gotten off track? I'm going to focus first on ends - what are we trying to do in the world? How and where are we prioritizing our efforts? I think in the past when we talked about re-energizing Canadian diplomacy, we often looked to periods where perhaps there was a greater degree of focus, a greater degree of coherence in our diplomacy. We haven't conducted a foreign policy review since 2005 and while these reviews are often obsolete by the time that they're completed, they do serve a vital function of gathering people together, including people who disagree with each other, and building some set of shared ideas about what Canada's role in the world is. The other factor that's diminished our capacity is domestic polarization in foreign policy. We are in this period where there is such a divergence among the political parties on questions of foreign policy. There does need to be some effort to bring together the different political parties to perhaps not forge a consensus, as ideal as that might be, but to perhaps narrow the range of foreign policy options. Because it's just not possible for a country to be influential on the world stage, to have any kind of sustained impact, if there is this dynamism, this constant change, in fairly dramatic fashion, in terms of where our foreign policy is headed. There really is a need for debate within civil society as well. In terms of the priorities themselves, these institutions are absolutely vital for Canada to make an investment in reinforcing the multilateral order. There really is a need for Canada to reinvest in its role, and to strengthen its capacity at UN missions. If we look at what's happening with the UN today we can see the parallels of what we saw in the 1930s as to how we killed the League of Nations. I think there needs to be an awareness of what we're doing, and how we're slowly killing the institutions that have been fundamental to Canada's role in the world.

In terms of means, once you've established your ends, you need to align your resources with those aims. One of the principal challenges of Canada's foreign policy in recent years has actually been resourcing. We take stances on the international stage but are lacking when it comes to actually resourcing, in terms of development assistance, diplomacy, ensuring that our UN delegation does not have the smallest size compared to other G7 countries, etc. You have to bring the resources, you can't do foreign policy on the cheap. This is a period of global transition. And then, diplomatic choice matters enormously. Where you establish your embassies, which countries you prioritize, where you engage in high level visits, what relationships you cultivate. There's going to be a need to strengthen our relationship with the US. What's important about this Canada-US aspect and the multilateral dynamic is the self-reinforcing dynamic that ends up taking place when you're engaged effectively in both areas. When we were well engaged within multilateral institutions we become much more relevant in Washington. We became much more influential. We're influential when we can bring solutions to global problems. At the same time, our influence in many parts of the world is also enhanced by knowledge that we have strong connections with the US. It's that virtuous dynamic that's been at the core of the moments when Canada has been most effective diplomatically.

Dr. Manulak wrapped up with two questions. Since we're very likely to have a new government in this country, what are the implications for much of what we discussed? What elements of this agenda could potentially translate? What other means can we pursue? These things are very important, including in a year where Canada is going to be assuming the presidency of the G7. What does that mean for Canada's global engagement? And then the huge elephant in the room is November 5th, the US election. What are the implications for Canada? What are the

implications for the world? Depending on how that election turns out, the international order is going to be hugely affected. The ramifications for Canada's security diplomacy are enormous.

Discussion

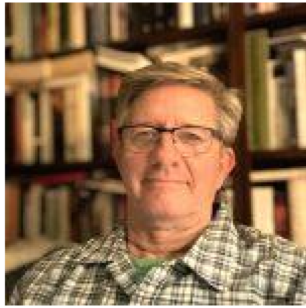
The speakers were asked for their comments on whether this is an opportunity for Canada as a middle power, as much as a crisis. As well, is there hope that we can actually increase the capabilities of our diplomatic service? Dr. Pedersen said that there absolutely is an opening for middle powers and we're seeing a lot of the other middle powers, especially in the case of the Middle East, speaking out. She would absolutely agree that resources are a problem, including with the human rights reporting. Why is this not prioritized for more staff at Global Affairs? These should be priorities of a Canadian government. Dr. Manulak said that we need to direct our attention to where, on a global basis, there are common interests, and he thinks that too often right now we're focused on areas of conflict. One of those areas is in the climate space. In the security space, he already referenced some of the work on cooperative threat reduction that Canada does in the context of the Global Partnership.

In which of the following two categories of organizations can we have the most influence to accomplish and strengthen our position? The UN and all of the organizations associated with it; or the Commonwealth, la Francophonie, Davos, etc. Dr. Pedersen said that the Conservatives are most likely to pull out of the UNFPA and UNRWA, so she would argue that the current Canadian government should be focusing the most on those two agencies in terms of continuing to fund them and add to their legitimacy. Dr. Manulak said that he really likes our work in the UN, he thinks it is very vital. We need to strengthen the institutional foundations of our security policies in the UN context. That involves resourcing our diplomacy, ensuring that we have perhaps some tighter prioritization in terms of our UN engagements but strengthening and identifying some clear priorities, ie. climate change, biodiversity, the sustainable development goals, the institutions of disarmament. He likes the suggestion of cooperation through the Commonwealth and la Francophonie. Canada needs these fora where it enjoys closer relationships with a subset of countries. In the past this has been a vital forum for Canada, to help build coalitions in the UN context.

Out of the major international security challenges that we all face as an international community, are there any that stand out to you where Canada can specifically have an impact, whether that's because of a unique skillset or history or context? Dr. Pedersen said that we should be doing a lot more in peace building, in negotiations, in the way we have before. That's one of Canada's best skill sets and she would love to see any government decide to really emphasize that in the future.

What specific areas do you think Canada should be investing more in to boost its security diplomacy capabilities? Dr. Manulak said that he thinks we need to recognize this transitional phase that we are in, and the threat that we're going to enter into a world of big power politics where 'might makes right' is going to increasingly dominate. If the election goes in a way nobody in this room wants it to go, we are going to have to work together very closely to reinforce that international order, and to some extent, to keep the Americans engaged in that order because he thinks that's very much in question.

Speaker Biographies



Robin Collins is Secretary of Canadian Pugwash Group and a Rideau Institute Board Member. He writes columns for Peace Magazine on war and peace, and climate issues; and book reviews for Canadian Field-Naturalist. He has been exploring common security alternatives to conflict and existential threats.

Walter Dorn is Professor of Defence Studies at the Royal Military College & Canadian Forces College. He teaches officers of rank major to brigadier-general from Canada and about 20 other countries. As an "operational professor" he participates in field missions and assists international organizations, especially the United Nations. He served with the UN's Expert Panel on Technology and Innovation in UN Peacekeeping and has been active in civil society, including as an ICRC contractor, as WFMC President and CPG Chair. Website: www.walterdorn.net.

Alexandra Gheciu is a Professor at the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs and the Director of CIPS.

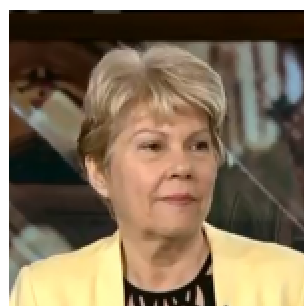
Cesar Jaramillo is the executive director at Project Ploughshares. His focus areas include nuclear disarmament, the protection of civilians in armed conflict, emerging military technologies and conventional weapons controls. As an international civil society representative Cesar has addressed, among others, the UN General Assembly First Committee, the Conference on Disarmament, the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, as well as states parties to the Nuclear Non- Proliferation Treaty and to the Arms Trade Treaty. He has given guest lectures and presentations at academic institutions such as New York University, the National Law University in New Delhi, the China University of Political Science and Law in Beijing, and the University of Toronto. Cesar graduated from the University of Waterloo with an MA in global governance and has bachelor's degrees in honours political science and in journalism. Prior to joining Project Ploughshares, he held a fellowship at the Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI).

Matt Korda is the Associate Director for the Nuclear Information Project at the Federation of American Scientists, where he co-authors an authoritative open-source estimate of global nuclear forces. Matt's open-source discoveries about nuclear weapons have made headlines across the globe, and his work is regularly used by governments, policymakers, academics, journalists, and the broader public in order to

challenge assumptions and improve accountability about nuclear arsenals and trends.

Michael W. Manulak is Assistant Professor at the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, Carleton University. He is author of *Change in Global Environmental Politics: Temporal Focal Points and the Reform of International Institutions* (Cambridge University Press 2022). His academic work has appeared in *Review of International Organizations, Foreign Affairs,* and *Global Environmental Politics*. He is co-author of the Advisory Panel report *Canada and the United Nations: Rethinking and Rebuilding Canada's Global Role.* From 2015-2019, he served in the Government of Canada, mainly within the Department of National Defence, representing the government internationally on proliferation security issues. His doctorate is from the University of Oxford (St. Antony's College).

Branka Marijan is a senior researcher at Project Ploughshares and a CIGI senior fellow. She is a lecturer in the Master of Global Affairs program at the Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy at the University of Toronto. At Ploughshares, Branka leads research on the military and security implications of emerging technologies. Her work examines concerns regarding the development of autonomous weapons systems and the impact of artificial intelligence and robotics on security provision. Her research interests include trends in warfare, civilian protection, use of drones and civil-military relations. She holds a Ph.D. from the Balsillie School of International Affairs with a specialization in conflict and security. She has conducted research on post-conflict societies and published academic articles and reports on the impacts of conflict on civilians and diverse issues of security governance, including security sector reform. Branka closely follows United Nations disarmament efforts and attends international and national consultations and conferences. She is a board member of the Peace and Conflict Studies Association of Canada and a research fellow at the Kindred Credit Union Centre for Peace Advancement at the University of Waterloo.



Peggy Mason is the President of the Rideau Institute on International Affairs. A former Canadian Ambassador for Disarmament to the UN and an expert on the political/diplomatic aspects of UN peacekeeping training, since June of 2014 Peggy Mason has been the President of the Rideau Institute, an independent, non-profit think tank focusing on research and advocacy in foreign, defence and national security policy. In that capacity, she brings a progressive voice to issues ranging from the imperative of nuclear disarmament to the centrality of UN conflict resolution and the progressive enhancement of international law.

Paul Meyer is Fellow in International Security and Adjunct Professor of International Studies at Simon Fraser University. He is a founding Fellow of the Outer Space Institute, a senior advisor to ICT4Peace and a Director of the Canadian Pugwash Group. Prior to assuming his current positions in 2011, Mr. Meyer had a 35-year career with the Canadian Foreign Service, including serving as Canada's Ambassador to the United Nations and to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva (2003-2007). He teaches a course on diplomacy at SFU's School for International Studies and writes on issues of Canadian

diplomacy, nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, outer space security and international cyber security.

Jennifer (Jen) Pedersen PhD works at the intersection of politics and policy. Currently Senior Legislative and Policy Advisor to NDP Foreign Affairs Critic Heather McPherson, Jen has spent a decade advising Parliamentarians on Foreign Affairs and International Development policy. Her past roles include senior humanitarian policy advisor for a Canadian non-governmental organization and program manager on conflict resolution at a Brussels-based NGO. She holds a PhD in international politics from Aberystwyth University and has published on women and war, the arms trade, peace activism in Liberia, and tribal conflict and mediation in Yemen.

Alex Neve is an adjunct professor in international human rights law at the University of Ottawa and Dalhousie University, and a Senior Fellow with the University of Ottawa's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs. He served as Secretary General of Amnesty International Canada from 2000 – 2020. He has a Master's Degree in International Human Rights Law from the University of Essex and is an Officer of the Order of Canada.

Alexandra Volokhova is a PhD candidate in AI at Université de Montréal and Mila — Quebec AI Institute. Her research interests include applications of AI for social good, such as drug discovery and material design. In addition, Alexandra is interested in ethical and societal implications of military AI applications and explores ways to resist AI militarisation from within the research community.

Conference Program

Security Options for a Troubled World

October 25, 2024 at the University of Ottawa

9:00am-9:30am – **Introductions and Scene Setting Address**

- *Alexandra Gheciu and Cesar Jaramillo*

9:30am-10:30am – **Panel 1: “Nuclear Nightmares: How to Revive Arms Control & Disarmament”**

- *Moderator: Frank von Hippel*
- *Panelists: Cesar Jaramillo, Matt Korda*

10:30am-10:45am Coffee Break

10:45am-11:45am – **Panel 2: “Countering the Danger of Autonomous Weapons and Managing the AI Effect”**

- *Moderator: Nisha Shah*
- *Panelists: Branka Marijan, Alexandra Volokhova*

11:45am-12:45pm – **Panel 3: “Constructing the Future of UN Peace Operations”**

- *Moderator: Paul Meyer*
- *Panelists: Walter Dorn, Peggy Mason*

12:45pm-2:00pm – LUNCH

2:00pm-3:00pm – **Panel 4: “How to prevent War in Space”**

- *Moderator: Cesar Jaramillo*
- *Panelist: Paul Meyer*

3:00pm-3:15pm – Coffee Break

3:15pm-4:15pm – **Panel 5: “Curtailing the Global Arms Trade and promoting Common Security”**

- *Moderator: Peggy Mason*
- *Panelists: Robin Collins, Alex Neve*

4:15pm-5:15pm – **Panel 6: “Re-energizing Canada’s Security Diplomacy”**

- *Moderator: Alexandra Gheciu*
- *Panelists: Jen Pedersen, Michael Manulak*

5:15pm-5:30pm – Concluding Remarks