



ROYAL DANISH DEFENCE COLLEGE

Post Conference Report
NDU-RDDC Roundtable

COMPREHENSIVE
**STRATEGIC
WARFARE**
PRESENT AND
FUTURE

22-23 October 2024



Conversations



@Foothills



ROYAL DANISH DEFENCE COLLEGE

Post Conference Report
NDU-RDDC Roundtable

COMPREHENSIVE **STRATEGIC WARFARE** PRESENT AND FUTURE

22-23 October 2024

Introduction

The global environment is increasingly marked by geopolitical shifts, including the diminishing US global dominance, the rise of China's economic might, the spread of fascist and populist governments, and protracted regional conflicts. This fundamental shift in the global environment, coupled with rapid technological advancement, has profoundly impacted how wars are conducted. That is why the battlefield is no longer confined to physical terrains but has expanded into digital, economic, and ideological arenas.

Unlike conventional warfare, the future of strategic warfare will, therefore, encompass a wide array of tactics, extending beyond traditional military force, including cyber warfare, economic sanctions, disinformation campaigns, and the deployment of artificial intelligence. Future wars will be more complex and require countries to be more vigilant, technologically advanced, and resilient.

In a joint effort to deepen insights into the future landscape of strategic warfare, Pakistan's National Defence University (NDU) and Denmark's Royal Danish Defence College (RDDC) conducted a two-day roundtable conference in Islamabad.

The conference, titled “Comprehensive Strategic Warfare: Present and Future,” addressed pressing security and defence issues with perspectives from Europe and South Asia. The agenda included three working sessions, covering:

1. **Working Session 1:** Lessons learned from the Ukraine War.
2. **Working Session 2:** Impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on Human Society and Security.
3. **Working Session 3:** Socio-Political Security Implications of Migration/Refugees.

Each session featured presentations from both NDU and RDDC, followed by plenary debates. The conference was part of a series of collaborative exercises between RDDC and NDU, since 2014.

The event highlighted the strength of the partnership between the two institutions, providing a productive platform for mutual learning. Through open discussions and an academic approach, NDU and RDDC broadened their understanding of complex strategic issues while embracing diverse perspectives. As the topics discussed were of strategic importance to both countries and institutions, the authors have strived to balance perspectives, include nuances, and highlight points of disagreement – all while respecting the mutually agreed upon Chatham House Rule, under which the entire conference was held. This report summarises the findings of the two-day roundtable discussion.



DAY 1
WORKING SESSION-I

**Lessons Learned from
the Ukraine War**

In the first working session, the panel delved into the ongoing war in Ukraine, revealing the complexity of modern warfare that employs conventional and unconventional means, including emerging technologies, AI, and drones. The Ukraine battlefield serves as a global analytical war 'laboratory', which allows militaries all over the world to learn and adapt based on the experiences from the ongoing fighting. The key takeaways of the session are highlighted below:

Perspective from Pakistan Delegates

- The Russia-Ukraine war highlights how historical grievances and geopolitical ambitions shape insecurities, emphasising the importance of nuanced diplomatic engagements.
- Pakistan can leverage advanced technologies like big data analytics, UAVs, and autonomous systems to address its numerical disadvantage against India.
- Challenges arise with the use of autonomous systems, including accountability and compliance with international law, as detached operators may exhibit reduced empathy and responsibility.
- Lessons from post-war peace frameworks like NATO and the EU can guide Pakistan in enhancing regional stability and cooperation.

Perspective from Danish Delegates

- The Nordic region has gained strategic importance, with Finland and Sweden joining NATO, resulting in a high concentration of advanced 5th-generation fighter aircraft like the F-35.
- Denmark plays a role in multi-domain operations, integrating air, land, sea, and cyber capabilities to enhance strategic readiness.
- In a high-information battlefield, decision-making models like the Observe, Orient, Decide, Act (OODA) loop are critical for responding swiftly in complex, high-pressure situations.
- As European countries are increasing defence budgets rapidly, reallocating resources from social welfare programs has economic and social consequences, which will affect public welfare.

Common Perspectives

- The Russia-Ukraine war demonstrates the decisive role of advanced technologies, enabling fast, informed decisions through big data visualisation and intelligence processing. This has created a highly data-driven battlefield.
 - Multi-domain operations integrating air, land, sea, and cyber capabilities redefine conventional military strategies across regions.
 - Economic consequences include resource reallocation from welfare to defence budgets, creating ripple effects on quality of life and public stability.
 - Divisions within NATO and EU, driven by specific national interests and right-wing political forces, complicate efforts to maintain a united front with Ukraine and against Russia.
 - Effective dialogue and mediation between adversaries remain essential during hostilities to prevent escalation and achieve lasting peace.
-

DAY 1
WORKING SESSION-II

**Impact of Artificial Intelligence
(AI) on Human Society and
Security**

The second working session discussed how artificial intelligence (AI) reshapes warfare and society and how its adoption requires careful ethical, organisational, and technical considerations. Perspectives from Pakistan and Denmark provided insights into how modern technology shapes the military landscape, focusing on conflicts in Gaza and Ukraine. The key takeaways of the session were:

Perspective from Pakistan Delegates

- Public narratives often overstate AI's potential to entirely reshape warfare, portraying it as eliminating human involvement, which is more utopian than realistic.
- AI has significantly changed military operations, with 'command and control' (C2) systems applications to analyse data and provide actionable battlefield solutions.
- Pakistan lags on the AI maturity index due to limited data infrastructure and a shortage of skilled professionals. That is why, Pakistan views AI militarisation as a significant concern.
- AI is seen as an opportunity to address socio-economic issues in Pakistan, but the lack of basic digital infrastructure hinders full utilisation.
- Pakistan is actively incorporating AI in education and economic sectors, aiming to improve development indicators despite challenges like biased data, privacy violations, and information manipulation.

Perspective from Danish Delegates

- AI is already impacting society in Denmark and Europe, particularly through job displacement due to manufacturing, logistics, and services automation.
- Advanced AI has prompted more human-machine cooperation in the processes of target identification and decision-making support in military operations. While this increases speed significantly, it bears heavy legal and moral concerns.
- International governance and regulations are necessary to prevent AI militarisation in line with the European value of promoting 'AI for Peace'. The EU is a global frontrunner in such regulation with the AI Act.

Common Perspectives

- AI has revolutionized warfare by making data a tactical and strategic asset for global militaries in supporting C2, especially in pattern recognition.
- Cybersecurity concerns and the AI arms race emphasise the need for global accountability and ethical oversight of advanced technologies.
- Non-state actors, such as private companies like Google and Microsoft have entered the battlefield as they support Ukraine's defence efforts with technological solutions.
- Collaboration with regional and global partners is essential to establish safety protocols and prevent an AI arms race. Transparency is crucial to mitigating cross-border AI-related security risks.
- Increased funding for studying ethics in AI is vital to addressing challenges like algorithm biases and enhancing fairness, accountability, and transparency in AI decisions.
- Bridging the global digital divide requires investments in AI education and infrastructure in underdeveloped areas. While AI technologies can help developing countries catch up in some areas, they will most likely accelerate the existing inequalities between the Global North and South.

DAY 2
WORKING SESSION-III

**Socio-Political Security
Implications of
Migration/Refugees**

The session discussed the socio-political and security implications of increased levels of migration. Covering both European and South Asian perspectives, the session discussed how a burgeoning refugee crisis impacts host countries, causing economic fragmentation and social disparities. The key takeaways of the session are described below:

Perspective from Pakistan Delegates

- Pakistan remains a key host nation for refugees, especially after the Taliban takeover of Kabul in August 2021, with an influx of 700,000 Afghan refugees.
- Hosting refugees has imposed a significant financial strain, with \$2.1 billion allocated to education and healthcare for Afghan refugees, despite minimal international acknowledgement and support.
- Refugees often settle in informal camps or urban slums, leading to increased crime, illicit activities, and militant harbouring, placing additional pressure on law enforcement in urban centres like Karachi and Peshawar.
- Remittances from migrants, including those from Pakistan, play a crucial role in supporting the economy and mitigating some challenges of migration pressures.
- Natural disasters like floods have caused significant internal displacement and urban migration, exacerbating existing urban pressures and resource constraints.

Perspective from Danish Delegates

- Denmark began implementing one of Europe's strictest immigration policies in 2019, aiming for zero asylum seekers in the long term.
- Danish immigration policy focuses on temporary rather than permanent protection, with rigorous integration requirements and border control measures to maintain social cohesion.
- Denmark's policies reflect a broader trend of restrictive migration strategies in Europe, emphasising national solutions over collective EU approaches.
- Social and political disparities caused by migration pressures have led to increased calls for enhanced security and financial assistance to manage the challenges.

Common Perspectives

- The economic and social burdens of refugees and migrants lead to social tensions and contributes to ethnic and sectarian divisions.
- According to data from UNHCR, low and middle-income countries shoulder most of the global responsibility for hosting refugees, with 71% of the world's refugees hosted by these countries in 2024.
- The UNHCR framework can be an option for the international community to address global migration issues by overcoming policy obstacles created by divergent Global North and South priorities.

- The EU struggles to find consensus on migration policies, with rising illegal migration from both Eastern and Southern borders leading to political fragmentation and individual solutions by member states.
- Strengthening border force management is essential to control illegal migration, but sustainable development requires long-term solutions aligned with common goals beyond aid and donations.

Conclusion

The roundtable provided another collaborative learning opportunity for Pakistan and Denmark to discuss critical global security issues and the complexities surrounding modern conflicts. By deriving lessons from Israel's war crimes in Gaza, the Russia-Ukraine war, AI's transformative role, and the socio-political impacts of migration, the conference highlighted the importance of integrated, multi-prong approaches in strategic planning. The discussions reaffirmed the necessity for innovative strategies, balanced international cooperation, and inclusive solutions to enhance resilience against the evolving nature of threats.

Picture Gallery







PROGRAMME

DAY 1 22 October 2024 (Tuesday) Dress code: <i>Lounge Suit</i>			
Introductory Session: Comprehensive Strategic Warfare: Present and Future			
Time (hours)	Activity	Remarks	
0930-1000	Arrival, Coffee/ Tea and Registration		
1000-1005	Recitation of Holy Quran		
1005-1015	Welcome and Introductory Remarks by NDU	Maj Gen Raza Aizad, HI(M), DG ISSRA	
1015-1025	Introductory Remarks by Head of RDDC-delegation	Mr David Vestenskov, Director for Centre for Stabilisation, RDDC	
1025-1030	Group Photo	Collaboration Wall	
1030-1100	Stretch break		
Working Session 1: Lessons Learned from the Ukraine War			
Time (hours)	Activity	Guest Speaker	Remarks
1100-1105	Introductory Remarks by Moderator from RDDC	Mr Jens Vesterlund Mathiesen, RDDC	
1105-1120	Presentation from Pakistan	Dr Ghulam Mujaddid, HoD Strategic Studies Department, FCS, NDU	Scope: <i>Perspective from Pakistan/South Asia</i>
1120-1135	Presentation from Denmark	Lt. Col. Steen Kjærgaard Deputy Director and Military Analyst at the Institute for Strategy and War Studies, RDDC	Scope: <i>Perspective from Denmark /Europe</i>
1135-1235	Interactive session		
1235-1240	Wrap-up by Moderator		
1240-1340	Lunch		ISSRA Lounge
Working session 2: Impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on Human Society and Security			
Time (hours)	Activity	Guest Speaker	Remarks
1340-1345	Introductory Remarks by Moderator from NDU	Ms Faiza Qureshi, ISSRA	
1345-1400	Presentation from Denmark	Dr Daniel Ølgaard Møller, Assistant Professor, Institute for Military Technology, RDDC (via Zoom)	Scope: <i>Perspective from Denmark /Europe</i>
1400-1415	Presentation from Pakistan	Dr Sumaira Kausar, Director, Centre of Excellence AI, Bahria University	Scope: <i>Perspective from Pakistan/South Asia</i>
1415-1515	Interactive Session		
1515-1520	Wrap-up by Moderator		
1520	Dispersal		
1930-2100	Conference Dinner	Hosted by NDU	Cafe Aylanto, F-7 Islamabad Dress code: <i>Business casual</i>

DAY 2 23 October 2024 (Wednesday) Dress code: <i>Lounge Suit</i>			
Working session 3: Socio-political Security Implication of Migration/Refugees			
Time (hours)	Activity	Guest Speaker	Remarks
1000-1030	Arrival, Coffee/ Tea and Registration		
1030-1035	Introductory Remarks by Moderator from NDU Pakistan	Ms Ayesha Sohail, ISSRA	
1035-1050	Presentation from Denmark	Dr Jonas Gejl Kaas Assistant Professor at the Institute for Strategy and War Studies, RDDC	Scope: <i>Perspective from Denmark /Europe</i>
1050-1105	Presentation from Pakistan	Ms Fahmida Iqbal Khan, UNICEF Pakistan	Scope: <i>Perspective from Pakistan/South Asia</i>
1105-1205	Interactive session		
1205-1210	Wrap-up by moderator		
1210-1220	Stretch Break		
Closing Session			
Time (hours)	Activity	Remarks	
1220-1230	Closing Address by NDU		
1230-1240	Closing Remarks by RDDC	Mr. David Vestenskov, Director for Center for Stabilisation at RDDC.	
1240-1250	Group Photo		
1250-1350	Lunch	Margalla Greens Golf Club	
1930-2100	Dinner Reception at Danish Ambassador's Residence <i>Hosted by the Royal Danish Embassy</i>	Dress code: <i>Business casual</i>	
DAY 3 24 October 2024 (Thursday) Dress code: <i>Casual</i>			
Cultural Activity: Visit Abbottabad			
Time (hours)	Activity	Remarks	
0830-0930	Breakfast at Hotel		
0930-1200	Depart for Abbottabad		
1200-1500	Visit Pakistan Military Academy (PMA) & Lunch		
1500-1700	Depart for Nathia Gali/ Coffee Break		
1700-1800	Depart for Bhurban		
1800-2000	Visit Bhurban & Dinner		
2000-2100	Depart for Islamabad		
DAY 4 25 October 2024 (Friday) Dress code: <i>Casual</i>			
Cultural Activity: Visit NEOC and Lok Virsa Museum			
Time (hours)	Activity	Remarks	
0830-0930	Breakfast at Hotel		
0930-1000	Depart for National Emergency Operation Centre (NEOC)		
1000-1100	Briefing/ Visit NEOC		
1100-1130	Depart for Lok Virsa Museum/ PNCA		
1130-1230	Visit Lok Virsa Museum		
1230-1430	Lunch at TKR Restaurant/ Juma Prayer		
1430-1500	Depart for Hotel		



Jointly Organised by
National Defence University & Royal Danish Defence College