In a world of growing geopolitical friction, this year’s Challenges Annual Forum (#CAF22Delhi) will involve partners and key stakeholders to discuss how future peace operations can remain relevant and play a positive role in addressing emerging peace and security challenges. The in-person event is co-hosted by the United Service Institute of India (USI) in New Delhi.

With the highest number of violent conflicts since 1945, and growing pressures on peace operations, the UN Secretary General’s New Agenda for Peace will provide a momentum to advance a comprehensive and integrated approach to peace and security.

In the run-up to the New Agenda for Peace and the Summit of the Future in 2023, the CAF22 provides a unique chance for policymakers, scholars, practitioners and civil society representatives to engage in high-level conversations as well as dialogue-driven workshops and help identifying effective solutions.

The CAF22 will be held 6–7 October on the theme 'Future of Peace Operations'.

Three sub-themes are chosen for extensive deliberations during two days:

- Place for Preventive Deployment in Diplomacy
- Protecting the Protectors
- Protection of Civilians in Peace Operations.

Outcome

One major outcome of the Challenges Annual Forum is to produce a brief report summarising the key takeaways and discussion points. The CAF report constitutes one of the main collective outcomes of the partnership and should be concrete, actionable, thought-provoking and innovative.

See back page for more information about the three subthemes.
The Challenges Annual Forum 2022 will centre its discussions around three sub-themes:

- **Place for Preventive Deployment in Diplomacy**
  Preventive diplomacy is considered one of the best tools for containing and solving armed conflicts. In the wake of the conflict in Ukraine, there have been many calls on the need to reinvigorate faith and confidence in preventive diplomacy and the primacy of politics. One of such tools are observer missions which have been useful for preventing escalation of conflict by monitoring ceasefire lines or buffer-zones, and by facilitating conditions for comprehensive peace agreements.

  In this period of great power rivalry, observer missions are expected to again become more prominent as they are more agile and less intrusive and costly than large multidimensional peacekeeping operations.

  Looking forward, how could one-dimensional observer missions help preventing the escalation of a conflict? What should they look like, and how can they best be complemented by diplomatic efforts resolving larger political processes?

- **Protecting the Protectors**
  With over a thousand peacekeepers killed since 1948, a central question for peace operations and their troop contributing countries (TCC’s) is how peacekeepers can be kept safe and secure whilst implementing their mandates. Peacekeepers often become targets when they are perceived choosing sides in a conflict.

  How can better understanding of attack patterns against peacekeepers help design operational responses? How can this data be used to improve local perceptions of peacekeepers while improving their safety and security?

- **Protection of Civilians in Peace Operations**
  Protection of Civilians (POC) in armed conflicts should be a core objective of peace operations, as civilians are always the worst victims of violent conflicts. Significant progress at the normative level as well as increased attention in the UN Security Council have however not resulted in better POC on the ground. Many reports in fact suggest an increased violence against civilians in 2021.

  With future peace operations likely having a lighter footprint, how can protection of civilians be safeguarded in those new operational settings? How is this best achieved and by whom?