



2017 UNAA NATIONAL CONFERENCE

—
**ENHANCING AUSTRALIA'S
SUPPORT TO GLOBAL
PEACE & SECURITY:**

Seventy Years On.

CONFERENCE SUMMARY REPORT



United
Nations
Association
of Australia



“

The greatest tribute we can pay to those who have died is to rededicate ourselves to continuing their work to build and maintain peace.”

-- ANTONIO GUTERRES, UN SECRETARY-GENERAL,
REMARKS AT THE WREATH-LAYING CEREMONY
HONOURING FALLEN PEACEKEEPERS, 24 MAY 2017

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On the 15th and 16th of September 2017, leading experts, thought leaders and practitioners in the field of global peace and security converged upon the Australian War Memorial for the 2017 United Nations Association of Australia National Conference.



The conference provided a collaborative and open forum for concept development and practical discussions about the future of UN Peacekeeping, with a particular orientation towards Australia's contribution to and support for UN peacekeeping. Day 1 of the conference honoured the significant contributions of Australian peacekeepers over 70 years. Day 2 explored contemporary issues and how Australia could best contribute.

Leading experts provided a holistic review of both regional and global peace case studies and trends over the past century. They highlighted the innovation and attitudes that are required to successfully move towards the achievement of sustainable global peace and security. Delegate engagement ensured that topics were thoroughly explored and provided a continuing platform for future questions to be addressed.

Several key themes were repeated throughout the conference. These included:

- > The enormous challenge and complexity of contemporary peace operations, coupled with the likelihood of their continuation in an increasingly multipolar world;
- > the interconnected nature of conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, while strengthening local ownership through effective capacity-building; and
- > greater civil-military integration of components within UN peace missions, commensurate with better training to ensure the protection of civilians, enhanced situational awareness and allocation of necessary resources.

Numerous speakers expressed the view that Australia's current contribution to UN conflict prevention and peace operations was far below an acceptable level and needed to be increased in terms of purposeful civil-military-police contributions. Many speakers noted that Australia had a lot to offer, and lamented that Australia had less than 40 military personnel and no police currently serving under the UN Flag. This commitment degraded Australia's influence and reputation.

This conference supported the achievement towards UN Sustainable Development Goal 16 in “promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.”

Matthew Kronborg,
UNAA National Executive Director





SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



SESSION SUMMARIES

OPENING CEREMONY:

Welcome to Country: Aunty Agnes Shea,
Traditional custodian of Ngunnawal land
(Canberra region)

Major General Michael G. Smith AO (Retd),
National President of United Nations
Association of Australia

Dr Brendan Nelson AO, Director of the
Australian War Memorial

United Nations Association of Australia National President Major General Michael G. Smith AO (Retd) opened the 2017 National Conference citing the importance of United Nations leadership in perpetrating the survival of a rules based global order. Highlighting that the National conference honours the contributions of the Australian military, police and civilians of over 70 years of peacekeeping, the UNAA President emphasised the important role of the National conference as a forward thinking arena for innovation and policy change. Dr Brendan Nelson continued the opening ceremony by referencing the important role Australia has historically played in the construction and maintenance of peace, acknowledging the unveiling of the Australian Peacekeeping Memorial on ANZAC Parade, his vision was for the AWM to be transformed to a living memorial for peace.





SESSION ONE: AUSTRALIAN AND UN PEACE OPERATIONS: THE FIRST 70 YEARS

CHAIR: Lidia Moretti, Co-Vice President, UNAA

Dr Peter Londey, ANU Lecturer and eminent peacekeeping author - How it began, Indonesia 1947

Dr David Horner AM, Official Historian and Professor of Australian Defence History, ANU - Australia's contribution, achievements, key lessons



Dr Peter Londey commenced the panel by highlighting the historical context of Australian peacekeeping. Drafting of the United Nations Charter, foreign policy development and regional colonial conflicts created a tense starting platform for Australian peacekeepers in our region. However, diplomatic collaboration and cooperation, particularly between Indonesia and Australia has seen a lasting shift in societal attitudes towards Asian culture and heritage. Dr Londey cited the challenges in achieving impartiality, particularly in formative post-WWII years. Dr David Horner continued the discussion by sharing the political context that shaped Australian foreign policy in a post-Vietnam era and expanded Australian peacekeeping efforts in a post-Cold War era. Involvement in areas across the globe including Rwanda, East Timor and Haiti marked the golden years of Australian peacekeeping to date and went beyond simply being a good international citizen.

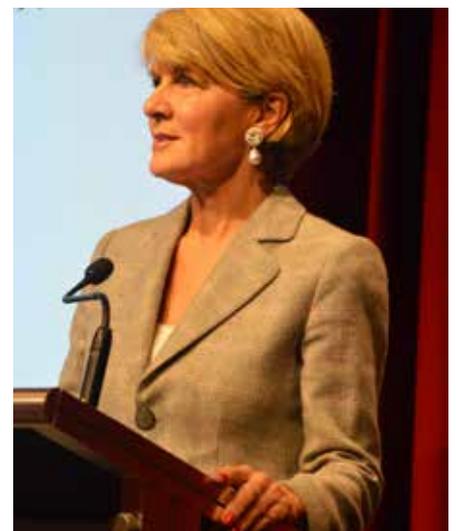
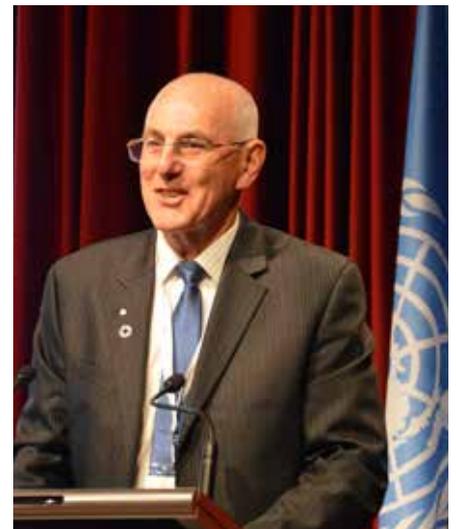


KEYNOTE ADDRESS: AUSTRALIAN AND THE UNITED NATIONS

Chair: Major General Michael G Smith AO (Retd), UNAA National President

Hon. Julie Bishop MP, Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs

The Hon. Julie Bishop MP commenced the keynote address by highlighting the role of peacekeeping in fulfilling the core mandate of the United Nations Charter. Emphasising the proud history of Australian involvement in peacekeeping, Foreign Minister Bishop cited the imperative of cooperation and innovation in making peace last in conflict zones globally. Further, driving forward agendas of women, peace and security and the collaboration of existing enforcement structures can improve the development of sustainable peace.





AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL SUPPORT TO THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION IN IRAQ

Chair: Dr Zeny Edwards, Convenor UNAA National Peace Program

Bruce Armstrong, CEO Aspen Medical

Aspen Medical CEO Bruce Armstrong delivered an inspiring account of how an Australian company is working with the United Nations to make a huge contribution in Iraq, building on its successful track record in other locations such as Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste. Regional presence, sustainability and efficiency ensure that there is a mutual benefit to engaging with the private sector in such areas. The changing demographic landscape ensures logistical challenges which Aspen Medical look forward to engaging with and utilising innovative methods in delivering medical care.



SESSION TWO: REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON UN PEACE OPERATIONS

Chair: Prof Ramesh Thakur, UNAA Goodwill Ambassador

Indonesian perspective - Dr Marty Natalegawa, former Indonesian Foreign Minister

Timor-Leste perspective - Remarks delivered by Janelle Saffin on behalf of HE Jose Ramos Horta AC, former President & Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, and Chair of the UN High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations

Dr Marty Natalegawa reminded us that all UN peace missions are political, and becoming more complex with the convergence of local, national, regional and global issues. The involvement of non-state actors added to this complexity. Dr Natalegawa hoped that the SDGs would provide opportunities for better partnership between actors, but highlighted the challenges to peace operations caused by the growing tension between unilateralism and multilateralism. Emphasising the importance of conflict prevention and peacebuilding, he noted there was a ‘trust deficit’ in the UN caused by the unwillingness of member states to fully disclose and confront their problems. Dr Natalegawa thought that the Security Council needed to be more adaptive, and that regional organisations (such as ASEAN) could play a more positive role.

Janelle Saffin highlighted the difficulty of reflecting and improving on previous peacekeeping missions due to the international framework in which they operate. Based on the findings of Jose Ramos Horta’s chairmanship of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, as well as his practical UN experiences in post-conflict environments, she emphasised the need for the Security Council and Secretariat to be more ‘field focused’ and to ensure missions are properly led and resourced.

In summing-up, Professor Thakur highlighted the urgent need for Security Council reform and the importance of regional solutions and organisations. He thought that countries in the Asia-Pacific region had much to learn from the more collaborative practices in Africa regarding the peace and security agenda. And he reminded delegates that Australia’s future rested in the region, within which Australia could play a more prominent role in enhancing the UN’s effectiveness.



SESSION THREE: LESSONS FROM CONTEMPORARY PEACE OPERATIONS

Chair: Patricia Garcia AO, Convenor UNAA National SDG Program

Kevin Chang, Senior Political Officer UNMISS

Colonel Dan Bennett, Commander Australian contingent, UNMISS

Kevin Chang opened the South Sudan Case Study by contextualising the current challenges faced by UNMISS: a peacekeeping mission operating within a context of ongoing civil conflicts; the effective collapse of the 2015 Peace Agreement; the complex regional political dynamics at play; and legacies from an difficult relationship between host government and the UN. Kevin Chang analysed the unique characteristics of the UNMISS protection of civilians (POC) mandate and practice under these challenging circumstances, from which lessons could be drawn for future peacekeeping.

Colonel Dan Bennett echoed the enormous challenges facing UNMISS, describing South Sudan as one of the most fragile states in the world. He emphasised the complex operating environment and tribal nature of the conflict. He believed that Australia's long focus on the 'war on terror' had seriously degraded Australia's experience and standing in contributing to complex UN peace operations.



SESSION FOUR: ENHANCING CONFLICT PREVENTION, PEACEKEEPING AND PEACEBUILDING

Chair: Penny Wensley AC, former Australian Ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva and New York

Ian Martin, Executive Director Security Council Report, former SRSG and member of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations

Major General Patrick Cammaert (Retd), former Force Commander and Ambassador for UN Women

Steve Killelea AM, Founder and Executive Chairman Institute for Economics and Peace

The Hon. Penny Wensley opened Day 2 of the conference by emphasising the critical role of peacekeeping as part of the UN's peace and security agenda. She noted the importance of the women, peace and security (WPS) track, in which Australia had played - and should continue to play - a leading role. She encouraged the Australian Government to enhance support to the United Nations and to sustain this effort, noting that an effective multilateral system was in Australia's best security interests, as had been demonstrated repeatedly since the establishment of the United Nations. In her view, the Government and parts of the bureaucracy had a negative, distorted and ill-informed attitude to the critical work of the United Nations, requiring more public awareness and agitation to change this perception.



Ian Martin, a former Special Representative of the Secretary General in East Timor, Nepal and Libya, as well as a member of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, focussed on the critical need for more effective conflict prevention mechanisms. Emphasising the political nature of conflict management, he highlighted Security Council limitations in terms of 'upstream conflict prevention', but thought the Council could do more to ensure peace missions were adequately mandated and resourced to prevent countries relapsing into conflict. Based on his considerable experience, he believed that the Office of the Secretary-General needed to have more authority and take greater leadership in upstream conflict prevention. He concluded by emphasising the continuing critical importance of peacekeeping, and added his support to other speakers who had called on Australia to do more.





Major General Patrick Cammaert, a recognised international expert practitioner on UN peacekeeping, argued that the United Nations was facing daunting challenges and that peacekeeping was at the crossroads. Better training and greater re-engagement by developed countries was required in order to meet the challenges of modern peace operations. Noting the essential importance of protecting civilians in conflict-affected states, he called for better training and preparation by troop and police contributing countries. He called for greater accountability for the (in)actions of peacekeepers and the critical need for more women.



Steve Killelea addressed the need for better peacebuilding efforts, noting the critical role of the United Nations. He highlighted the findings, statistics and trends from the annual Global Peace Index, produced by his Institute for Economics and Peace. He explained the concept of 'positive peace', emphasising its importance to sustainable peacebuilding.



SESSION FIVE: PREPARING, PLANNING AND TRAINING FOR FUTURE CHALLENGES

Chair: Jonathan Curtis, President UNAA ACT

Dr Jeni Whalan, University of Queensland

Leanne Smith, Associate Director of Whitlam Institute and former Chief of Policy and Best Practices, UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations

Jim Della-Giacoma, former Deputy Director, Centre on International Cooperation, New York University



Dr Jeni Whalan commenced discussions by reflecting on the seven decades of peacekeeping frameworks to highlight the recurring issues that continue to provide challenges. Highlighting that innovation is key, Dr Whalan cited that Australia can be more prepared to face these challenges through more consistent cooperation with host governments and remaining flexible in logistics. Leanne Smith highlighted that the future of peacekeeping will require investment in basic services and stakeholders, like women and girls, that have otherwise been ignored. Jim Della-Giacoma cautioned that future Australian strength in peacekeeping will be a result of strong bilateral and multilateral alliances.



SESSION SIX: AUSTRALIA'S FUTURE ENGAGEMENT

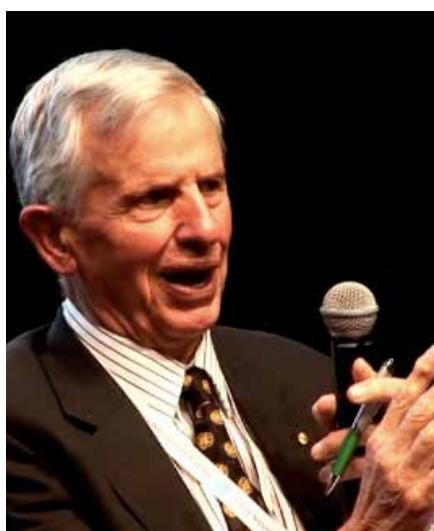
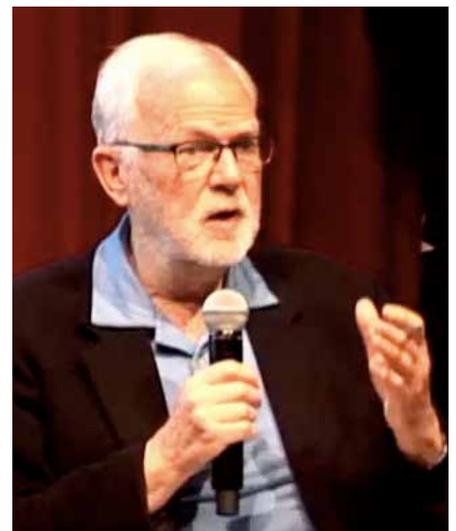
Chair: Dr Kathleen Turner, Co-Vice President UNAA

Professor John Langmore, former National President of UNAA - strengthening Australia's civilian contribution

Major General Tim Ford AO (Retd), former Military Adviser to the UN Secretary-General - strengthening Australia's military contribution

Commander Amanda Kates, Australian Federal Police - strengthening Australia's police contribution

Professor John Langmore reaffirmed that prevention, both structural and operational, is a logistical imperative in the future development of peacekeeping operations globally. Highlighting the necessity of mediation, stakeholder management and international engagement, Langmore cited that Australia must be clearer about what our national interests and agendas are when engaging with future peace operations. Major General Tim Ford echoed these concerns and proposed the need for Australia to engage with more proactive agendas in developing sustainable peacekeeping. Commander Amanda Kates continued discussion by exploring the unique role of Australian Federal Police in international peacekeeping and increased cooperation with local forces is strengthening the mandate of police-led diplomacy.



SESSION SEVEN: AUSTRALIA'S DIPLOMATIC ENGAGEMENT AND PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS

Chair: Dr Jeremy Farrall, Convenor UNAA Academic Network

Brian Gleeson, UNAA Director and Director of Human Resource UN Relief Works Agency

Haidi Willmot, former Program Officer UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Fellow at the Stimson Centre

Lisa Sharland, Senior Analyst Australian Strategic Policy Institute



Brian Gleeson opened the final panel by exploring the importance of developing youth and the provision of youth services in conflict zones as they become ambassadors for future change. Referencing UNRWA, Gleeson provided insights into the severity of long-term conflict zones on social and cultural dynamics. Haidi Willmot advocated for active Australian diplomatic engagement on UN peace operations, providing the example of Australian leadership on the protection of civilians, to demonstrate how consistent engagement on peacekeeping policy issues can have a real impact. Lisa Sharland highlighted the importance of developing Australian diplomatic engagement in conflict zones and the importance of continuing education and capacity, in light of historically low peacekeeping contributions.





The very strength of the UN has been its collective architecture and binding principles of its charter.”

-- HIS EXCELLENCY GENERAL THE HONOURABLE SIR PETER COSGROVE AK MC (RETD)
GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA & UNAA PATRON
UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA RECEPTION, FRIDAY, 15 SEPTEMBER



RECEPTION SPEECH

HIS EXCELLENCY GENERAL THE HONOURABLE SIR PETER COSGROVE AK MC (RETD) GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

United Nations Association of Australia Reception
Friday, 15 September, 5 minutes

I acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet, the Ngunnawal People and pay my respects to their elders, past and present, and to elders from other communities who may be with us today.

- Major General Michael Smith (National President, United Nations Association of Australia) and Mrs Margaret Bain-Smith.
- Mr Matthew Kronborg (National Executive Director, United Nations Association of Australia)
- His Excellency Mr Jose Ramos Horta (Former President and Prime Minister of Timor-Leste; Chair of the UN High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations; Nobel Laureate)
- His Excellency Mr Abel Guterres (Dean of Diplomatic Corps; Ambassador of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste)
- His Excellency Mr Yohanes Kristiarto Soeryo Legowo (Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia)
- Senator Barry O’Sullivan (Senator for Queensland)
- Lieutenant General John Sanderson (Former Governor of Western Australia; Former Chief of Army)
- Members of the United Nations Association of Australia
- Distinguished Guests
- Ladies and Gentlemen

In 1945, in the aftermath of the Second World War, leaders from 50 countries gathered at the San Francisco Conference.

Together they represented 80 per cent of the world’s people—people of every religion, race and continent.

Their objective, their mission—to preserve peace and achieve a better world.

And so, the United Nations was born, into a war-weary and desperate world, looking for better, more civilised pathways.

It was recognition that the collective futures of all people and all nations require the collective action of all people and nations.

It was a commitment to cooperation.

A commitment to a rules-based international order.

These were leaders who had witnessed the very worst excesses of nationalism and aggression.

From the horrors of a world war, the advent of a nuclear age, the rapid disintegration of colonialism—they founded the UN for peace.

And now, 70 years later, their vision and the UN has been remarkably successful.

The world has been relatively stable and secure. Catastrophic Conflict has been held in check.

Millions, billions, around the world lead better lives because of the work of the UN.

SOME TOPICAL EVIDENCE:

- Around 80 million people receive food assistance from the UN's World Food Programme.
- Over 100,000 child soldiers have been released to date as a result of UN efforts.
- And UNICEF has supplied 2.8 billion doses of vaccine to prevent children from dying from preventable diseases.

To draw a line in my remarks here I might simply end by:

- Applauding the work of the UN.
- Praising the United Nation's Association of Australia for engaging, educating and inspiring Australians about the UN.
- All the while acknowledging that more can be done, that the UN needs to continue to evolve and that UNAA is part of that process.

But—this is not the end.

Because, despite all it has achieved, the UN continues to find itself, its very rationale, under question.

This questioning extends beyond the chronic and inevitable sniping about cost and bureaucracy.

It comes from a more philosophical, ideological revisionism.

From a belief that the best way to address global challenges is not through multilateralism, but through nations independently pursuing their own agendas.

It is argued this self-interest, will deliver optimal benefits for both the individual nation state and for the broader global community.

It is, if you like, a form of trickle-down economics applied to international relations.

Now, no-one would ever deny that nations shouldn't act in their own best interests—that is what they do.

And no-one disputes that powerful nations can act independently on the international stage to good effect.

But this 'enlightened unilateralism' is essentially ad hoc, without guiding principles or frameworks, and is subject to the whims and vagaries of individual leaders and governments.

The very strength of the UN has been its collective architecture and binding principles of its charter.

THE THINGS IT STANDS FOR...

- the collective pursuit of peace;
- respect for international law and justice;
- the protection and promotion of human rights;
- eradication of disease, hunger and discrimination;
- and the ending of violence against women and girls.

...these things are common to all of us, they are common to humankind and they transcend individual nation states.

And overwhelmingly, they are best realised through the cooperation of the UN, not through the self-interest of nation states.

The leaders who conceived the UN are no longer with us.

But the UN and their legacy continues.

We are now the champions of that legacy.

We cannot let the passing of time diminish the circumstances and events that made the establishment of the UN so important.

We cannot assume the contribution the UN makes to our world and our peace today, will continue without our constant vigilance.

Prosecuting the case for the UN, working for a better world, this is what we must do, this is what the UNAA does every day.

To Mike (Smith) and the supporters and volunteers at the UNAA thank you for all you do to ensure the UN and its vision continues.

Thank you.

“Peacekeeping plays a critical role in the United Nations framework in maintaining the rules-based international order. If we let this slip, our national security will be imperilled...”

– MAJOR GENERAL MICHAEL G SMITH AO (RETD)

THANK YOU

On behalf of the UNAA and the cause of global peace and security, thank you to all who contributed to this important conference.

I would like to thank our speakers and panel chairs for giving your time and sharing your enormous knowledge and experience - we have all been enriched from your contributions. My thanks to you, the delegates, who added to our knowledge bank through your useful interventions and ideas. I am particularly grateful to all our volunteers who made this conference a reality. Special thanks to our Conference Convenor, Jenna Allen, who has worked so tirelessly as a volunteer for many months to ensure the success of this conference. Words can not satisfactorily express my appreciation to you and your hard working team. Of course, the conference would not have been possible without the support of our sponsors to whom I am most indebted: the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Department of Defence, the Australian Federal Police, the Australian War Memorial, Compass Housing, Unity Housing and Aspen Medical.

The UNAA delivers over 150 events and activities across Australia each year thanks to over 200 hundred titled volunteers and a small financially efficient backbone staff. Together we work to inform, inspire and engage all Australians regarding the work, goals and values of the UN to create, a safer, fairer and more sustainable world. If you would like to donate towards this important cause please visit www.unaa.org.au/donate.

We the peoples ...

**Major General Michael G Smith AO (Retd),
UNAA National President**



LINKS

DAY ONE
PHOTOS

DAY TWO
PHOTOS

VIDEOS

PRESENTATIONS

RECOGNISING THE SUPPORT OF



Australian Government
Department of Defence



Australian Government
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade



aspenmedical

IN SUPPORT OF



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THE UNAA WORKS TO INFORM, INSPIRE AND ENGAGE ALL AUSTRALIANS REGARDING THE WORK, GOALS AND VALUES OF THE UNITED NATIONS TO CREATE A SAFER, FAIRER MORE SUSTAINABLE WORLD.

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Thinking globally, planning nationally, acting locally

