



Parliamentary Commissioner  
for the Armed Forces  
of the German Bundestag

**DCAF** Geneva Centre  
for Security Sector  
Governance

# **Operating abroad: Enhancing the ombuds institutions' cooperation in the context of UN peacekeeping operations**

**International Workshop**

## **WORKSHOP PROGRAM**

**Berlin, 04 - 05 Oct 2021**

Courtyard Hotel by Marriott Berlin City Center (Axel Springer Strasse 55)

This workshop is organised in the framework of DCAF's project "Supporting ombuds institutions for the armed forces to resolve grievances", funded by the German Federal Foreign Office.



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DEUTSCHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT

# Workshop Program

## DAY 1

### Workshop opening

#### 09.00 - 09.20

Dr. Eva Hoegl, Parliamentary Commissioner for the Armed Forces, Germany (10 min)

Ambassador Thomas Guerber, Director, DCAF (10 min)

### Technical introduction

#### 09.20 - 09.30

Ajla Kuduzovic, Junior Project Officer, DCAF (10 min)

### Session 1 - Experiences from UN peacekeeping operations

#### format: panel

#### 09.30 - 10.10

**Moderator:** Dr. Luka Glušac, Programme Manager, DCAF

#### **Speakers:**

Dr. Annika S. Hansen, Center for International Peace Operations, Germany (20 min)

Flotilla Admiral Axel Schulz, Contingent Commander of German UNIFIL Contingent & Commander of UNIFIL Maritime Task Force (20 min)

#### 10.10 - 11.00

#### Q&A

**Description:** The first part of this session provides an overview of UN peacekeeping operations, with the emphasis on the mandates to protect civilians, promote human rights and support security sector reform. In the second part, a high-ranking military professional speaks about personal experience from peacekeeping operations, concentrating on signalling and reporting problems, dispute resolution, grievance mechanisms and follow-up procedures.

**Guiding questions:**

- How are the mandates to protect civilians, promote human rights and support security sector reform implemented in UN peacekeeping operations?
- What mechanisms are available for peacekeepers and the local population to signal and report problems?
- How do grievance mechanisms function in practice?

**Coffee break and group photo****11.00 - 11.30****Session 2 - The interface of complaints mechanisms at national and international levels****format: input presentation with Q&A****11.30 - 12.00****Moderator:** Dr. Luka Glušac, Programme Manager, DCAF**Speaker:**

Dr. Ai Kihara-Hunt, Associate Professor, Graduate Program in Human Security, University of Tokyo, Japan (online)

**12.00 - 12.45****Q&A discussion**

**Description:** This session explores the interface and interplay between UN and national jurisdictions on the issue of human rights violations committed in UN peacekeeping operations.

**Guiding questions:**

- What commonalities and areas of overlap exist between national and international complaints mechanisms in regard to UN peacekeeping operations?
- Do points of contestation or potential synergies exist at the interface of UN and national jurisdiction?
- How do national authorities report on cases of alleged human rights violations committed in UN peacekeeping operations?

**Lunch****12.45 - 14.00****Session 3 - UN grievance mechanisms applicable to UN peacekeeping operations****format: panel****14.00 - 14.30**

**Moderator:** Dr. Hans Born, Assistant Director and Head of Policy and Research Department, DCAF

**Speakers:**

Ms. Mercedes Gervilla, Chief, Conduct and Discipline Service (CDS), Administrative Law Division, Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance, United Nations (online) (15 min)

Ms. Beth Asher, Senior Programme Officer at CDS, United Nations (online) (15 min)

**14.30 - 15.15****Q&A discussion**

**Description:** This session provides a critical overview of UN grievance mechanisms, their mandates and functions, as well as the level of interplay among and between them, insofar that these are relevant to UN peacekeeping operations.

**Guiding questions:**

- What UN grievance mechanisms are available for UN peacekeepers and the local population?
- How does the Conduct and Discipline Service operate in practice?
- How does the CDS cooperate with other UN grievance mechanisms and national authorities, concerning complaints from and against UN peacekeepers?

**Coffee break****15.15 - 15.30****Session 4 - The role of ombuds institutions in UN peacekeeping operations****format: panel****15.30 - 17.00**

**Moderator:** Ms. Ajla Kuduzovic, Junior Project Officer, DCAF

**Speakers:**

Mr. Roald Linaker, Parliamentary Ombudsman for the Armed Forces, Norway (10 min)

Mr. Cherif Mamadou Thiam, Head of International Relations Department, Médiateur de la République, Senegal (10 min)

Mr. Robert Laimer, MP, Chairman, Parliamentary Commission for the Federal Armed Forces, Austria (10 min)

**Description:** This panel discussion compares the experiences of ombuds institutions having investigating cases regarding the rights of military personnel deployed in UN peacekeeping operations and the rights of the local population, mindful of the scope of mandates of individual ombuds institutions.

### **Guiding questions:**

- What is the experience of ombuds institutions in handling cases related to international missions, particularly UN peacekeeping operations?
- What is the nature of complaints received? Do ombuds institutions receive indications of wrongdoings through other channels (e.g. the media, anonymous emails, etc)?
- Have ombuds institutions identified any gaps in their mandate related to international missions?

## **DAY 2**

### **Session 5 - End of day 1 summary**

**format: moderated roundtable**

**09.00 - 10.00**

**Moderator:** Dr. Luka Glušac, Programme Manager, DCAF

**Description:** A summary discussion on the sessions of the first workshop day, noting key conclusions and potential future steps.

### **Session 6 - Unpacking an international field visit**

**format: panel**

**10.00 - 10.30**

**Moderator:** Mr. Sebastian Juengst, Personal Assistant, Parliamentary Commissioner for the Armed Forces, Germany

**Speakers:**

Dr. Eva Hoegl, Parliamentary Commissioner for the Armed Forces, Germany (15 min)

Mr. Reinier Van Zutphen, National Ombudsman, The Netherlands (15 min)

**10.30 - 11.30**

**Q&A discussion**

**Description:** This session explores how different ombuds institutions conduct field visits to troops abroad, utilising a step-by-step approach to identify critical stages, key challenges and procedural details. Thereby, ombuds institutions are able to compare notes on conducting field visits, recognise common best practices, and refine their own approach and methodology.

**Guiding questions:**

- How do preparations for field visits abroad look like?
- What are common practical challenges when conducting field visits abroad?”
- Which follow up activities can ombuds institutions conduct once they return from visits abroad?

**Coffee Break****11.30 - 12.00****Session 7 - Outreach activities: attracting complaints from personnel deployed abroad****format: moderated roundtable****12.00 - 13.30****Moderator:** Dr. Luka Glušac, Programme Manager, DCAF

**Description:** This panel discussion is devoted to discussing how to attract more complaints from military personnel stationed abroad. The participants are encouraged to share their experiences in conducting outreach activities, intended to increase awareness and accessibility to armed forces personnel stationed abroad, as well as to their families back home.

**Guiding questions:**

- How could ombuds institutions make themselves more visible to armed forces personnel stationed abroad, and to their families back home?
- What actions could be taken before, during and after deployment to make ombuds institutions more accessible to armed forces personnel?
- What actions do ombuds institutions take to attract more complaints from military personnel stationed abroad?

**Lunch****13.30 - 15.00****Session 8 - Enhancing further cooperation in the context of international missions****format: moderated roundtable****15.00 - 16.30**

**Moderator:** Dr. Hans Born, Assistant Director and Head of Policy and Research Department, DCAF

**Description:** This session aims to explore pathways for enhanced cooperation between ombuds institutions in the context of international missions. It will be used to discuss how to implement the Resolution, in light of the workshop discussions.

**Guiding questions:**

- How can cooperation between and among ombuds institutions engaged in international missions be further enhanced and operationalized?
- What activities could be conducted to further promote the Resolution and attract new signatories?
- How can extant modes of cooperation be streamlined and made more sustainable?

**The official signing of the Resolution****16.30 - 16.45****Description:** Official signing of the Resolution**Conclusion****16.45 - 17.00****Description:** Sum up of the workshop and discussion of next steps.