

Title: Civilian Protection in Great Power Conflict

Speakers: The PAX Protection of Civilians (POC) team: Marc Garlasco, Wilbert van der Zeijden & Brittany Roser

Date: 31 January 2022

Time: 1200-1315

Where: In-person, C-138

POC: Dr. Pauline Shanks-Kaurin

Synopsis:

The PAX protection of civilians (POC) team is coming to the US for a series of talks on civilian harm mitigation (CHM) as we launch our free book, "On Civilian Harm." The organization is a strong proponent of civilian harm mitigation (CHM) - the tactics, techniques, and procedures first implemented by ISAF in Afghanistan (and now adopted by the US) as a way for militaries to minimize civilian harm from operations. However, many are questioning CHM with the shift from COIN to great power conflict. Some wonder if civilians can or even should be protected if there is a peer-level conflict fought by the US/NATO. PAX will discuss this rift in the world of POC actors, how recent revelations of failed airstrikes (Kabul & Baghouz) are leading to changes in US policy, the forthcoming Department of Defense Instruction on Civilian Harm, and the moral obligations to protect and compensate civilians even when the law does not require it.

Bios:

Marc Garlasco is the military advisor at PAX where he focuses on Civilian Harm Mitigation. He has split his career between the military and human rights spheres where he has tried to bridge the gap between the two communities. He began his career as Chief, High Value Targeting in the Pentagon but has also worked at Human Rights Watch & the United Nations as a war crimes investigator in Afghanistan, Gaza, Georgia, Iraq, Israel, Kosovo, Lebanon, Libya, Syria, and other conflict zones. He is coauthor of the ICRC report on Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas. From 2014-2016 he deployed on the USS Bulkeley, USS Gravelly, USS Normandy, and USS Theodore Roosevelt with the Center for Naval Analyses. While on the Theodore Roosevelt he assisted in a study of civilian harm mitigation from USN strikes in Iraq and Syria.

Wilbert van der Zeijden is Team Coordinator at PAX, the largest peace organization in the Netherlands. He leads the PAX Protection of Civilians effort to improve the capacity of military organizations to understand the human environment, mitigate harm and protect civilians during military operations. As a senior researcher on humanitarian disarmament at PAX, he helped establish the Don't Bank on the Bomb nuclear weapon divestment campaign and contributed to the development of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Earlier, he coordinated the Militarism and Globalization program at the Transnational Institute, Amsterdam.

Brittany Roser is the UN Advocacy Advisor for PAX in New York, where she focuses on identifying opportunities and fostering strategic engagement with key international actors, including the UN and its Member States, on a variety of peace and security issues. This includes themes such as the Protection of Civilians (PoC), Environment/Climate and Security, and Women, Peace and Security (WPS), among others. Prior to joining PAX, Brittany worked for the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect (ICR2P), the NGO Working Group on the Security Council (NGOWG/SC), and the UK House of Commons, with a particular focus on policy research and advocacy on international protection agendas. Brittany has a Master of Science degree focusing on International Relations and Security Policies from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE).