

UNU Update

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New UNU project aims to understand, prevent insurgent movements

Preventing the militarization of political disputes and strengthening the capacity of international organizations to mediate between governments and insurgency movements are the goals of a new [UNU](#) research project, *Understanding And Managing Insurgent Movements*.

Clashes between government forces and insurgent movements are the main cause of combat and civilian fatalities and casualties, internal displacement and refugee flows, and the main source of human rights violations today. Insurgent movements today are fuelled by a resurgence of ethnicity and religiosity; enhanced movement of people across international borders; free flow of ideas and technologies; and saturation of the black and gray arms market.

By studying past and current conflicts, the project will work to identify how the escalation of ongoing insurgencies and the emergence of new ones can be prevented.

There is scant literature on the early resolution as well as the effective management of insurgencies, says UNU Programme Officer Albrecht Schnabel, who, with Rohan Gunaratna has organized a workshop on the topic May 25-27 in Kathmandu, Nepal.

This work is needed to fill a gap in our understanding of the mechanisms and strategies that have been successfully used by state and international actors to militarily engage and politically negotiate with insurgent movements. There is also no systematic study explaining the causes, motivations, objectives, and strategies and tactics of insurgency.

This project brings together an international group of researchers (from Ireland, UK, US, Kosovo, Pakistan, Spain, Nepal, Algeria, India, Sri Lanka, Israel, Philippines, Singapore, Switzerland, Germany) specializing in insurgent movements. The project will include case studies, applying a common set of research questions.

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