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# Journal of Conflict Transformation & Security

**Special Issue**

**Guest Editor: Nergis Canefe**

# Journal of Conflict Transformation & Security



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\* The surnames are listed in alphabetical order.

## INDEXING & ABSTRACTING



- EconLit
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The Journal of Conflict Transformation and Security (JCTS) provides a platform to analyse conflict transformation and security as processes for managing change in non-violent ways to produce equitable outcomes for all parties that are sustainable. A wide range of human security concerns can be tackled by both hard and soft measures, therefore the Journal's scope not only covers such security sector reform issues as restructuring security apparatus, reintegration of ex-combatants, clearance of explosive remnants of war and cross-border management, but also the protection of human rights, justice, rule of law and governance. JCTS explores the view that by addressing conflict transformation and security holistically it is possible to achieve a high level of stability and human security, requiring interventions at both policy and practitioner level. These would include conflict management, negotiated peace agreements, peacekeeping, physical reconstruction, economic recovery, psycho-social support, rebuilding of primary services such as education and health, and enabling social cohesion. Other macro-level governance issues from constitution writing to state accountability and human resource management also need to be considered as part of this process of change.

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## Introduction

Nergis Canefe

This special issue resulted from lengthy discussions that took place during the 2017 Istanbul Human Security conference on “Human security at difficult times”. Of the many papers presented across multiple panels, four were brought together to provide a critical edge concerning the debates on dispossession, existential threats, and the refugee crisis in the Middle East within the larger context of the changing conceptualization of the human security paradigm.

The opening paper by Nergis Canefe, titled “Statelessness as a permanent state”, examines some of the key challenges that statelessness poses for traditional articulations of the human security paradigm. It provides a critical examination of the creation of “stateless peoples” to ascertain national boundaries and the transfer of wealth and possessions from targeted ethno-religious groups to others. In its conclusion, it posits that the current statelessness paradigm overlooks the long tradition in many parts of the Global South of using “cleansing” measures to create a national citizenry. Canefe also argues that the problem of statelessness is here to stay with us, and we should make the necessary adjustments to our understanding of human security accordingly.

The second paper by Pinar Uyan Semerci and Emre Erdoğan, entitled “Scapegoats to be ‘served hot’: local perceptions about Syrians in a fragile context”, sets the stage by arguing that, after decades-long global economic crises, semi-peripheral regions such as the Adana cotton plains in Turkey became the scene for increasingly tense relations among agricultural landlords, bureaucrats, industrialists, and peasants. The massive inflow of Syrians to Turkey after the Syrian Civil War is analysed in this specific context and against the backdrop of pre-existing issues linked to high youth unemployment and the perpetual need for a seasonal agricultural labour force. This paper draws conclusions about the reception of Syrian refugees based on research conducted in Adana in 2016 and it indicates that locals see Syrians as the cause of key economic problems. The authors evaluate independent variables such as demographic changes in the region, the immigrant status of the Syrians, and internal, seasonal Kurdish migration; they also consider contact between Syrian refugees and the local population as a mediating variable. Their findings indicate that contact between the local population and Syrian refugees has a positive effect

on the acceptance of Syrians' rights. When people have positive perceptions about Syrians' contributions to the labour market, this also increases support for rights to be given to them. In contradistinction, when the perception of threats from Syrians increases, support for their right to have rights decreases, and perceived threats by Syrians still matter in everyday politics.

The third paper by Enna Antea – “Mass displacement and human security in Lebanon: a risks analysis of the Syrian civil war's effects on Lebanese society” – takes this debate about the perception, adaptation, and integration of refugees one step further. The author argues that mass displacement in the Middle East has a major impact on civil society and constitutes a destabilizing factor from security, social, and economic perspectives. The massive refugee flow from Syria has repercussions in neighbouring countries, and Lebanon stands out as one of the main destinations despite the fact that it already has the world's highest proportion of refugees. In addition, Lebanon has historically been characterized by a difficult interfaith dialogue and structural political instability. In this context, mass migration from Syria to Lebanon has produced a multitude of tensions, violations, disputes, and limited conflicts that involve rival armed groups, political parties, and militants, and human security has been undermined in multiple ways on both sides. The author states that a specific Conflict Risk Reduction strategy is needed to minimize these destabilizing effects and prevent possible tensions between host community members and displaced Syrians. Unlike more traditional approaches to human security, this novel strategy is expected to consider the main destabilizing factors, identify risks, and ascertain involvement via direct, multidimensional interventions by NGOs and international organizations to enhance human security at all levels.

The fourth and last paper by Ato Muko – “Human security norms in East Asia: towards conceptual and operational innovation” – is an examination of the conceptual and operational features of human security in East Asia, and, while it removes us from the specific context of the Middle East, it is similar to the first paper on statelessness in that it employs a theoretical approach engaged with the determination of norm-complexes and norm dynamics in defining and redefining human security. The author carries out an analysis of eleven case studies conducted by local researchers and she posits that the reframed concept of human security is an international norm-complex. Furthermore, she analyses the three conceptual and operational features of the human security paradigm in East Asia: the nuances of its distribution, the wide range of perceived threats, and the role of the sovereign state as a means for securing human security. This final paper recommends further exploration of both empowerment from below and of dignity as important aspects of the human security paradigm.

Together, these four papers give us reason to reconsider the contemporary applications of the human security paradigm in the Middle East, East Asia, and elsewhere where the local dynamics are far too complex to fit into neat categories and easily formulated solutions and policy agendas. The human security paradigm arose from the ashes of the Cold War and yet we are operating in a new era marked by new forms of imperialism, colonialism, and entirely different dynamics regarding the debate about the balance of powers and the use of systemic violence. The logic behind its introduction and advocacy for the original paradigm was to counter the realist, state-centric understanding of security that championed state sanctity over the rights of the individual. Yet in a new world order, where inter-state warfare has been largely replaced by proxy wars and war on the elusive



enemy of terror, civil and ethnic wars ravage populations and thus the nature of security challenges has fundamentally changed. These new forms of conflict destroy infrastructure, worsen conditions of poverty and mass human suffering, and so give cause for increasing scepticism about the conceptual integrity of the human security paradigm. This special issue hopes to make a contribution to the ongoing debate about the uses and abuses of that paradigm by contextualizing, historicizing, and relativizing this enterprise while keeping intact its core tenet of dethroning the state as the agent and ultimate unit of security.

# JOURNAL of CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION and SECURITY



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## CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Journal of Conflict Transformation and Security (JCTS) is for academics, policy makers and practitioners to engage in discussions on a wide range of peace, conflict and human security related issues in a multidisciplinary forum with contributions from political science, security studies, international relations, development studies, post-conflict reconstruction studies, economics, sociology, international law, political history, and human geography.

As an international refereed e-journal, edited by a group of acclaimed scholars indicated in the Editorial Board, the Journal of Conflict Transformation and Security is published at its own website <http://www.cesran.org/jcts>. It welcomes submissions of **articles** from related persons involved in the scope of the journal as well as **summary reports of conferences and lecture series** held in the social sciences. Submissions in comparative analysis, with case studies and empirical research are particularly encouraged.

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**Prof. Alpaslan ÖZERDEM** - *Editor-in-Chief* - [alpozerdem@cesran.org](mailto:alpozerdem@cesran.org)

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