

## Precision Lethality and Civilian Harm Mitigation Challenges and Opportunities in the Future of Warfighting CONFERENCE – BACKGROUND READINGS

November 13-14, 2025

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### I. How does enhancing precision lethality advance U.S. interests?

- Claire Finkelstein & Orde Kittrie, “Evolving the Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan to Support Precision Lethality and Effective U.S. Military Operations,” Center for Ethics and the Rule of Law (2025), <https://www.pennccerl.org/files/evolving-the-civilian-harm-mitigation-and-response-action-plan-to-support-precision-lethality-and-effective-u-s-military-operations/>
- Command Sgt. Maj. T. J. Holland, “Decoding Lethality,” *Army University Press* (2024), <https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Journals/Military-Review/Online-Exclusive/2024-OLE/Decoding-Lethality/>

### II. How can a harm reduction strategy aid commanders in addressing human shielding in war?

- Michael J. McNerney & Brig. Gen. Matthew Isler, “Operational Effectiveness and Civilian Harm Mitigation by Design,” Modern War Institute (2024), <https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/military-review/Archives/English/Online-Exclusive/2025/Operational-Effectiveness/civilian-harm-mitigation-UA.pdf>
- Larry Lewis, “Israeli Civilian Harm Mitigation in Gaza: Gold Standard or Fool’s Gold?” *Just Security* (2024), <https://www.justsecurity.org/93105/israeli-civilian-harm-mitigation-in-gaza-gold-standard-or-fools-gold/>
- Geoffrey S. Corn, “Civilian Risk Mitigation: Why Context Matters,” *Articles of War* (2022), <https://lieber.westpoint.edu/civilian-risk-mitigation-why-context-matters/>
- Geoffrey S. Corn & Michael W. Meier, “Enhancing Civilian Risk Mitigation by Expanding the Commander’s Information Aperture,” *Oxford University Press* (2020), <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4905130>
- Sarah Holewinski, “Do Less Harm: Protecting and Compensating Civilians in War,” *Foreign Affairs* (2013), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41721000>

**III. What is the best way to improve data collection regarding civilian mortality and injury rates under a civilian harm mitigation strategy?**

- Department of Defense, Report on Civilian Casualty Policy, DoD (2019), <https://int.nyt.com/data/documenttools/pentagon-report-civilian-casualty-policy/e1dcecd2e02e27ae/full.pdf>
- Vera Bergengruen, “Ukraine’s ‘Secret Weapon’ Against Russia Is a Controversial U.S. Tech Company,” *TIME* (2023), <https://time.com/6334176/ukraine-clearview-ai-russia/>
- Mohammed Jawad, et al., “Estimating indirect mortality impacts of armed conflict in civilian populations: panel regression analyses of 193 countries, 1990–2017,” *BMC Medicine* (2020), <https://bmcmmedicine.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12916-020-01708-5>

**IV. Humanitarian aid to civilians in conflict zones, evacuation obligations, and the targeting of humanitarian safe zones**

- Orde Kittrie, “Time to Act on Human Shields,” Foundation for Defense of Democracies (2020), <https://www.fdd.org/2020/10/15/time-to-act-on-human-shields/>
- Harriet Macey, “Safe zones”: A protective alternative to flight or a tool of refugee containment? Clarifying the international legal framework governing access to refugee protection against the backdrop of “safe zones” in conflict-affected contexts,” *International Review of the Red Cross* (2022), <https://international-review.icrc.org/sites/default/files/reviews-pdf/2022-06/safe-zones-a-protective-alternative-to-flight-or-a-tool-of-refugee-containment-919.pdf>
- IHL Databases, “Rule 24: Removal of Civilians and Civilian Objects from the Vicinity of Military Objectives,” <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/customary-ihl/v1/rule24>

**V. Press, perfidy, and propaganda: The complexities of the information space in war**

- Larry Lewis, et al., “Preparing for Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response in Large-Scale Combat Operations,” CNA (2024), [https://www.cna.org/reports/2024/08/Preparing-for-Civilian-Harm-Mitigation-and-Response-in-Large-Scale-Combat-Operations\\_REV.pdf](https://www.cna.org/reports/2024/08/Preparing-for-Civilian-Harm-Mitigation-and-Response-in-Large-Scale-Combat-Operations_REV.pdf)
- Peter Prove, “Freedom of expression, and the protection of journalists in conflict situations,” WACC (2024), <https://waccglobal.org/freedom-of-expression-and-the-protection-of-journalists-in-conflict-situations/>

**VI. What role might artificial intelligence (AI) and other advanced technologies play in mitigating harm to civilians in war?**

- Larry Lewis, “Emerging Technologies and Civilian Harm Mitigation,” CNA (2023), <https://www.cna.org/quick-looks/2023/emerging-technologies-and-civilian-harm-mitigation>
- Anna Rosalie Greipl, “Artificial Intelligence for Better Protection for Civilians During Urban Warfare,” *Articles of War* (2024), <https://lieber.westpoint.edu/artificial-intelligence-better-protection-civilians-urban-warfare/>
- Larry Lewis & Daphné Richemond-Barak, “Could Emerging Technologies Have Helped to Avoid the Tragic Killing of Humanitarian Workers in Gaza?” *Modern War Institute* (2024), <https://mwi.westpoint.edu/could-emerging-technologies-have-helped-to-avoid-the-tragic-killing-of-humanitarian-workers-in-gaza/>

- Daniel R. Mahanty & Kailee Hilt, “Responsible AI and Civilian Protection in Armed Conflict,” Center for International Governance Innovation (2025), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep67631>
- Shaun Waterman, “Can AI Help Targeteers Curb Civilian Casualties?” *Air & Space Forces Magazine* (2025), <https://www.airandspaceforces.com/can-ai-help-targeteers-curb-civilian-casualties/>
- Alisa Laufer, et al., “Bridging tech and humanity: The role of AI foundation models in reducing civilian harm,” *The Hill*, <https://thehill.com/opinion/technology/4260162-bridging-tech-and-humanity-the-role-of-ai-foundation-models-in-reducing-civilian-harm/>

## **VII. Formation of working groups for future effective action**

- Dan E. Stigall & Anna Williams, “An Improved Approach to Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response: The Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan (CHMR-AP),” *Articles of War* (2022), [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=4202409](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4202409)
- U.S. Government Accountability Office, “Civilian Harm: DOD Should Take Actions to Enhance Its Plan for Mitigation and Response Efforts,” GAO (2024), <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-24-106257>