

Nederlandse Defensie Academy (NLDA) Special Chair of
Intelligence in War and Conflict (O.2 FTE)

**Sponsored by the NLDA to be established at the
Faculty of Governance and Global Affairs, University Leiden
The Hague**

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1. Background

The Faculty of Military Science (FMS) of the Nederlandse Defensie Academie (NLDA) and the Faculty of Governance and Global Affairs (FGGA) of Leiden University agreed in a Memorandum of Understanding to intensify their cooperation in the field of research, education and policy impact. Part of the agreement are the intentions and ambitions to create the possibilities of joint doctoral supervision, staff exchanges and the setting up of Special Chairs at the Institute of Security and Global Affairs (ISGA) for the purposes of implementing and advancing mutually reinforcing cooperation. Part of this cooperation has already come to fruition and institutionalization by the appointment of Professor Frans Osinga as Special Chair of War Studies at ISGA.

In this context, the NLDA wishes to fund and establish a part-time (0.2 FTE) Special Chair of Intelligence in War and Conflict at ISGA at the next possible moment in time.

The FMS is the Netherlands Defence organisation's military-scientific knowledge and research institute and provides military education at academic level. The courses given at the Netherlands Defence Academy bear comparison with courses given at civilian universities. In addition, it is the only military-scientific knowledge and research institute in the Netherlands. The FMS' scientific research is mainly Defence-oriented, with scores of scientific experts in the area of Defence contributing to improvements in military operations. The Netherlands Institute of Military History, also part of the Netherlands Defence Academy, mainly focuses on historical scientific research. The Netherlands Defence Academy's Faculty of Military Sciences is specialised in military subjects such as strategy, operations, defence economics, leadership and ethics. The faculty also focuses on civil-military cooperation and logistic and technical issues in the military field. The faculty works in close collaboration with civilian universities and knowledge institutes.

The research carried out by FMS can greatly enrich and enhance the scientific research of FGGA/ISGA and vice versa and cooperation could contribute to joint research projects in the field of security and defence cooperation and in assessing major developments in the field of

war studies, peace studies and the future of national, European and global security governance. Particular emphasis will be placed on contributing to ISGA's new research group on War, Peace and Justice and to develop a joint MA in War, Peace and Intelligence, but also to enhance cooperation and mutual reinforcement between the NLDA and ISGA via the Chairholder with members of ISGA's other research groups, most notably the research groups of Intelligence and Security, Cybersecurity Governance, Terrorism and Political Violence as well as Diplomacy and Global Affairs.

In this context, the establishment of a Special Chair of Intelligence in War and Conflict is proposed with the following features.

2. Context and Description of the Special Chair

Inter-state and intra-state violent conflicts has also influenced the use of intelligence. During conventional inter-state conflicts the deployment of intelligence was often regarded as a puzzle that could be solved. For instance, during the Cold War American intelligence services focused on many of these puzzles such as: How many long-distance missiles did the Soviet Union have? And how accurate are they? Answering these questions enabled the American intelligence services to solve the puzzle and assess the Soviet threat.

Compared to the inter-state conflicts, current multi-level conflicts are becoming far more complex. As a result of this, challenges with which the international community is confronted can no longer be regarded as practical puzzles easily solved. In an effort to elucidate the current challenges, the former chairman of the U.S. National Intelligence Council Gregory Treverton describes them as complex mysteries. These challenges are ambiguous and fuzzy and lack proven knowledge and fixed standards to achieve the intended objectives. As a result, the academic and theoretical study of intelligence in the context of complex, multifaceted conflicts requires a multidisciplinary approaches that ask deep questions about the nature, scope and impact of different tools of information gathering, risk analyses and intelligence. Furthermore, Intelligence Studies remain -at present- heavily practice-oriented, lacking a unified theoretical underpinning and analytical framework.

Against this background the Special Chair addresses the practical and theoretical role of intelligence during war and conflict and seeks to link the academic study of intelligence to the most pressing scholarly debates about complex conflicts. It studies how information is being provided to decision-makers such as military commanders that may help illuminate their decision options. The main focus will be on contemporary and future conflicts from a consciously multi-perspective approach (i.e. Western vs. global perspectives). These approaches include a focus on so-called 'stabilization missions' (e.g. Afghanistan – which will also be addressed from a critical non-Western perspective), peacekeeping missions (e.g. Mali), but also hybrid conflicts. With regard to so-called 'stabilization' and 'peacekeeping missions', recent studies highlight that conventional intelligence aimed solely at states, militaries, and target individuals is no longer sufficient. Rather, it is crucial for the actors involved to gain extensive knowledge of local populations (cf. the 'local turn' in conflict and peace studies) and their societies as well. Such a comprehensive intelligence approach poses great challenges that need to be studied both from a policy-oriented and theoretical perspective.

Hybrid threats, by definition, are designed to blur the distinction between peace and war, as well as complicate and fall below the target's detection and response thresholds. Russia's annexation of Crimea is a well-known but not the only example. Obtaining and communicating intelligence on hybrid threats is, however, difficult. This is because, before such threats materialize, they often only send out weak signals that are hard to detect and cannot easily be linked to any known trend or phenomenon. Moreover, these weak signals reside in a massive amount of irrelevant or misleading information. This makes it important to study how intelligence processes and mechanisms need to adapt to the emerged reality of hybrid conflicts.

To study intelligence during war and conflict, a multidisciplinary approach is required. While most intelligence studies research used to take a historical or political science perspective, the need for adopting other disciplinary perspectives becomes evident¹. The Special Chair should therefore use theoretical insights from a range of disciplines including organization theory,

¹ Coulthart, S. M. Landon-Murray and D. Van Puyvelde (2019). *Researching National Security Intelligence: Multidisciplinary Approaches*. Washington: Georgetown University Press.

public administration, sociology, International Relations as well as Peace and Conflict studies and apply these to both scholarly and policy-oriented core questions.

The research of the Special Chair will address the following main topics:

- Operational intelligence experiences of armed forces;
- Strategic and early warning;
- Intelligence and UN Peacekeeping
- Comparative studies between different missions, countries and/or organizations;
- Detecting and warning for hybrid threats;
- Intelligence cooperation in different contexts (whole of government, intra-agency as well as inter-agency);
- Producer-client relations of intelligence in different contexts;
- Absorption of technologies within organizations to advance intelligence;
- Future challenges to intelligence organizations;

3. Institutional embedding of the Special Chair

The Special Chair of Intelligence in War and Conflict would be positioned to complement ISGA's existing expertise on Intelligence and Security by providing an interdisciplinary approach to the relationship between Intelligence, War and Conflict. As mentioned, the Chair should also be viewed in the context of the partnership between ISGA and the NLDA as well as in the context of the new planned research group on War, Peace and Justice. In so doing, the Special Chair would provide an important contribution to both the implementation of the ISGA-NLDA MoU and cooperation opportunities on the one hand and to strengthen ISGA's research on war, peace and conflict studies on the other hand. The Special Chair would work in close cooperation with the Special Chair in War Studies, the Chair of UN Studies in Peace and Justice and the Chair of Security Studies. Given the multidisciplinary focus of the chair, further cooperation with most of ISGA's research groups will be encouraged. There is at present no comparable Chair in the Netherlands and European context that brings together the field of intelligence studies and security, conflict and peace studies, providing a strong rationale for establishing this Chair and wider

networking opportunities with internal and external academic circles and policy circles in The Hague, Brussels and beyond.

4. Tasks

The tasks of the Special Chair of Intelligence in War and Conflict will be:

- Initiate research and publish on Intelligence in War and Conflict;
- Supervision of PhD students;
- Contribute to education programs within ISGA;
- Contribute to the valorization of academic knowledge on the topic of Intelligence in War and Conflict.
- Contribute to the build up of ISGA's new research group on War, Peace and Justice

5. Profile of the Desired Candidate

To hold this Special Chair Leiden University (*in cooperation with the Netherlands Defence Academy*) seeks a candidate who can fill this particularly niche at the intersection of national/European/international intelligence and conflict and security. The candidate must have intimate knowledge of the Dutch defence and intelligence establishment and an excellent European and international network. In addition, the post-holder must be acting as a knowledgeable and established bridge between the NLDA and the FGGA/ISGA.

Given these considerations, we advice not to hold an open selection procedure, but appoint a potential candidate, namely Professor dr. Sebastiaan Rietjens (currently Professor of Security and Intelligence at the NLDA). [REDACTED]

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6. Committee

The Committee that created this report consists of the following members:

- Prof.dr. Joachim Koops (Security Studies, Institute of Security and Global Affairs, FGGA, Leiden University)
- Prof.dr. Frans Osinga (War Studies, Institute of Security and Global Affairs, FGGA, Leiden University)
- Prof. dr. Paul Ducheine (Professor of the Law of Military Cyber Operations, NLDA)
- Dr. Ernst Dijkhoorn (Assistant Professor, ISGA)
- Dr. Simon Wilmetts (Head of the Research Group of Intelligence and Security, Institute of Security and Global Affairs, FGGA, Leiden University)