

**Session:** News Faces of War

**Date/Time:** April 23, 2025 / 14:40-16:00

**Rapporteur:** Dongkeun Lee, Australian National University

**Moderator:** Mr Timoty Martin, The Wall Street Journal

**Speakers:**

Oded Ailam, Expert on Intelligence and Warfare

Richard Falkenrath, Johns Hopkins University

Shin Beomchul, Sejong Institute

Tokuchi Hideshi, Research Institute for Peace and Security

Wang Junsheng, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

**Session Sketch:**

The session, “New Faces of War,” was opened and moderated by Mr. Timothy Martin from The Wall Street Journal. The session not only covered the topics of the new technologies but also overall changes of warfare with the rapid political changes in contemporary time. He began the session by asking, “To what extent are we facing the new faces of war?”

In response, Mr. Oded Ailam, a member of the Jerusalem Center for Security and Foreign Affairs (JCFA) Research Institute, presented the case of the Gaza War that began on October 7 2023. Mr. Ailam explained that it has been the first “total digital war” in history and led to a complete restructuring of the military. In particular, he emphasized that a drone campaign targeting communication and observation centers was conducted within a few hours—very different from previous forms of warfare. In earlier cases, such as U.S. campaigns in Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan, similar operations took days or hours to execute. Mr. Ailam argued that this accelerated timeline represents a new phenomenon in the Gaza War.

Dr. Richard Falkenrath, a Senior Fellow at the Henry A. Kissinger Center for Global Affairs, School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) at Johns Hopkins University, identified three key features of the new faces of war: (1) Technology Availability, (2) Time, and (3) Trust. He particularly emphasized that advanced weapons technologies are now accessible to a wide range of actors, unlike in the past, when such technologies were restricted to a few states. Regarding time, Dr. Falkenrath noted that modern warfare tends to last longer than earlier conflicts. However, most military and strategic planning remains geared toward short-term operations, creating a mismatch with contemporary realities. Finally, he addressed the decline of trust in international politics. In the 1980s, the United States primarily focused on preparation and deterrence based on trust with its allies. Today, however, that trust has diminished, marking another major distinction between the current and previous strategic environments.

Dr. Shin Beomchul, a senior research fellow at the Sejong Institute, offered five points in

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## Session Sketch

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response to the moderator’s question. First, he highlighted the gap between the development and application of new technologies. For instance, although AI is rapidly being introduced into modern warfare, few military personnel have hands-on experience with it. Second, Dr. Shin discussed the challenges of supply chains, noting that the acquisition of new technological weapons cannot be accomplished by one country alone; states must rely on international supply networks. This implies that states with more robust supply chains will enjoy greater wartime sustainability. Third, he emphasized the importance of the cyber, space, and command-and-control domains. In future warfare, offense and defense occur simultaneously, making rapid intelligence collection even more critical. Fourth, Dr. Shin discussed the transformation of weapon acquisition programs. In contemporary times, the timeline for acquiring weapons is shrinking, and if states do not adapt their procurement processes to these new demands, they risk acquiring outdated systems. Lastly, he concluded by noting the increasingly blurred boundaries between peace and war due to the rise of gray-zone tactics.

Professor Tokuchi Hideshi, the President of the Research Institute for Peace and Security (RIPS), outlined five points in response to the moderator’s question. First, he stated that the use of military force has become more difficult because modern weapons are highly destructive. Second, international law governing the use of force has gained importance, further restricting the use of kinetic power. Third, increased interdependence among countries has made it more complicated to use force. Fourth, developments in information and cyber technologies have become highly significant. Lastly, the spread of international norms—such as human rights—has increased the political and humanitarian cost of war. Collectively, these factors have made the use of kinetic force more difficult in contemporary times and have ushered in what he called “the age of total warfare.”

Professor Wang Junsheng, the Director and professor of the Department of China’s Regional Strategy, National Institute of International Strategy at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, responded to the question by discussing potential scenarios of warfare in the region. He particularly emphasized the Korean Peninsula and repeatedly highlighted the importance of dialogue between the two Koreas and neighboring states. He especially pointed to President Trump’s engagement with North Korea as a potential opportunity for renewed conversations. He further noted that the two Koreas should consider how to deepen dialogue with China to promote regional stability.

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