

Programme of the Conference

‘The Changing World Order and Its Impact on Humanitarian Action’

Action perspectives for Dutch humanitarian policy and practice

Date: 16 June, 09:15 – 17:00 (followed by drinks)

Location: Clingendael, The Hague.

The global order is becoming increasingly multi-polar, with shifting power dynamics. Although these changes have unfolded over several decades, they became markedly visible in 2025. The changing state of global order coincides with a decline of the so-called ‘rules-based international order’. There is a growing disregard for international humanitarian law, human rights, and the international justice system. In addition, development and humanitarian funding are seen as an easy target for budget cuts, or more explicitly tied to the strategic interest of nation states, with the Netherlands making similar choices in recent months. These trends have serious consequences for people affected by crises, who continue to bear the brunt of the consequences of war and conflict, as well as existing inequalities and heightened health and safety risks.

Opening by Monika Sie Dhian Ho

Key note speakers: Hibak Kalfan, Michael Köhler, Thea Hillhorst

The conference aims to open up a space to explore how local and (inter)national responders can continue to provide relevant and effective support to affected people. It aims to support the sensemaking of fast-moving developments and to identify potential pathways for future work. Together, participants will examine the implications of the developments on the communities we work with. The working conference offers an opportunity to reflect on new ways of working within the Dutch humanitarian landscape, including how a central place for national and local actors can continue to be assured.

KUNO, Clingendael Institute and **The Hague Humanitarian Studies Centre** join forces to combine academic research, strategic thinking and facilitation to enable practitioners and policymakers to look ahead during this full-day **working conference**. It promises to offer a lot of engagement and discussion, a wide range of viewpoints, and to be democratic and decentralised. CEOs and senior staff from the Dutch humanitarian sector, including NGOs, UN agencies, academia, and policymakers, will come together to reflect, exchange ideas, and chart a path forward.

Objective: Offering knowledge-based action perspectives for Dutch humanitarian policy and practice amid the current shifts in the humanitarian system.

Programme

9:15	Arrival and registration	Hall
9:45	Plenary opening <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Welcome and opening statement by Monika Sie Dhian Ho, Director of Clingendael 2. Key Note Conversation between: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hibak Kalfan, Executive Director of the NEAR Network. • Thea Hillhorst, Director of the HSC. • Michael Köhler, Ambassador of the Grand Bargain. 3. Questions 	Plenary room
11:00	Coffee break	Hall
11:30	Parallel sessions: Morning sessions focus on the short term. <i>All sessions are under <u>Chatham House Rules</u></i> <p>Streams</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Logics of prioritisation: Interactive session to unpack how prioritisation of aid (beyond targeting) is a strategic multilevel process, in each and across organisations, where humanitarian action is shaped beyond needs and impact, including capacity, funding, and politics, critically examining decision-making amid growing constraints. 2) Localisation: Focus on challenges and opportunities surrounding localisation. Topics to be explored will be (direct) funding, accountability to Grand Bargain commitments, the future role of INGOs, innovative partnerships, and more. 3) Strengthening International Humanitarian Law: Six current initiatives that strengthen IHL (at the global, Dutch, and local levels) will be presented and discussed in groups. In the afternoon session: a moral council on IHL (tbc). 4) Scenarios: Focus on key action-oriented questions around the scenarios that a dedicated group will pursue. Scenarios are developed in the run-up to the conference with a selected representative group, facilitated by Clingendael. 	Breakout rooms
13:00	Lunch	Hall/garden
14:00	Parallel sessions: Continuation of morning sessions, but now focusing on the long term.	
15:30	Coffee break	
16:00	Closing reflections	
16:45	Networking drinks	
18:00	End	