



Peace Operations Training Institute®

Study peace and humanitarian relief any place, any time



May 2023 Newsletter

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UN Photo by Harandane Dicko.

New Health Course in Partnership with the World Health Organization

POTI is proud to announce the release of its newest course, [*Health of Peace Operations Personnel*](#), the latest course released in partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO). This course provides students with essential information on the unique health challenges facing peace operations personnel who are not working as health-care personnel or in a public health capacity. POTI would like to thank all the WHO technical teams that contributed to the development of this course.

The Institute has drawn on student feedback in developing this course to address the health needs and concerns of peace operations personnel working in increasingly challenging and diverse mission environments. In particular, this publication presents a compilation of WHO materials on preventing infectious and communicable diseases; managing outbreaks, pandemics, and epidemics; HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections; mental health; and health during emergencies and disasters. All course materials have been sourced from [OpenWHO.org](https://openwho.org), the WHO e-learning platform, and other WHO resources.

Physical, mental, and community health topics are covered over seven lessons, and students are provided with health resources that are accessible in the mission environment to support them in better understanding the major health risks, preventative measures, and best practices for managing physical health and mental well-being while deployed. Additionally, detailed information on outbreaks, epidemics, and pandemics ensures this primer will not only help protect mission staff while deployed but also prevent the spread of disease among civilians in conflict zones and other high-risk environments.

Health of Peace Operations Personnel includes diagrams, infographics, and external links to videos to enrich the student learning experience. Supplemented with learning activities and case studies on some of the most intractable health problems and greatest health-care achievements, the course is grounded in the real-world challenges faced by peace operations personnel every day.

POTI Student Feedback and International Day of UN Peacekeepers

The International Day of UN Peacekeepers is celebrated each year on 29 May. This year commemorates the seventy-fifth anniversary of UN Peacekeeping. On this day, POTI would like to celebrate our students who are serving, or who have served, on a peacekeeping mission. We at the Institute would like to thank these dedicated individuals for their contributions and sacrifices to peace.

In advance of celebrating POTI students on 29 May, the Institute is soliciting feedback from students enrolled in courses through the E-Learning for Mission Staff (ELMS) programme. POTI is proud to provide e-learning on peace operations to all of our students, and we thank our students for sharing their experiences with us.

The Institute has chosen to highlight Major Leticia Lese Monteiro of the Brazilian Air Force, who is presently deployed to the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). She shared the following with us, which has been lightly edited for grammar:

I am Maj Leticia Lese Monteiro of the Brazilian Air Force, and I am currently deployed with the Force Intervention Brigade as a part of MONUSCO.

My role in the mission as a Deputy of the G9 Cell is to perform the duties of a Staff Officer in charge of civil-military cooperation (CIMIC) activities.

My interest in joining a peacekeeping mission has always been linked to my mission in life, which, as a dentist, is to care for and serve people.

To be in MONUSCO as a blue helmet is certainly the most challenging and rewarding experience of my life, either in the military or as a civilian.

The experience acquired within the Brazilian Air Force and the institutional values that we learn and routinely practice, such as courage, discipline, persistence, and resilience, are fundamental in the context of a peacekeeping mission. I am grateful to the Brazilian Air Force, which made my dream of being deployed possible through professional improvement and training.

The biggest challenges of serving in a peace mission are the distance from family, cultural adaptation, the security threats of a conflict area, health risks, etc. However, what is extremely gratifying is the interaction with the local communities and



Major Leticia Lese Monteiro poses in front of the Force Intervention Brigade monument. Photo provided by Leticia Lese Monteiro.

exchanging experiences with colleagues from different parts of the world. At the same time, we receive personal improvement by sharing our experiences, learning other languages, and understanding cultural awareness.

To those who wish to participate in a Peacekeeping Mission, I encourage you to join preparatory courses and training to better understand how the United Nations system runs and the context of peacekeeping operations. Furthermore, it is a great idea to exchange with colleagues on the ground or former blue helmets.

Coincidentally, 29 May is not only the International Day of UN Peacekeepers but also my birthday. So, my birthday will be significant and unforgettable this year because I will be a peacekeeper on the ground with MONUSCO.

Finally, I wish all the best to all the blue helmets of yesterday, today, and forever for their contributions to peace and security worldwide.

The Institute would like to thank Major Monteiro for her valuable insights and commitment to peace. Major Monteiro's experience, and those of other ELMS students, will be featured on POTI social media channels on 29 May. We look forward to sharing our students' experiences with you on the International Day of UN Peacekeepers.

POTI Participates in the 67th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women

In early March, POTI engaged with stakeholders at the sixty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW67) at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The theme of this year's session was "Innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls". The session also revisited the agreed conclusions of the sixty-second session, "Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls".

CSW67 made it clear that investing in digital, science, and technology education for women and girls is an investment in the future. The digital divide is the new face of inequality, and digital learning skills are essential for women and girls' economic, cultural, and social advancement. The opportunity to hear from activists, ministers, academics, and others committed to closing the gender gap in technology and innovation, was invaluable. POTI is committed



Round-table discussion on "Good Practices in Addressing the Gender Divide and Gender Equality" during the CSW67 General Assembly.

to putting accessibility for all at the forefront of everything we do.

The Institute continues to be actively engaged in its partnership with the host of CSW67, UN-Women. The three-course suite Implementation of the UN Security Council Resolutions on the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda addresses some key gender equality and awareness issues raised during CSW67 and at its side events.

POTI Releases New Course, Updates, Translations, and Audiobook

The first few months of 2023 saw the Institute release one new course, two course updates, three translations, and an audiobook. In partnership with WHO, POTI released the much-anticipated new course, [*Health of Peace Operations Personnel*](#), as well as an update to the 2014 edition of [*Ebola Virus Disease: Awareness and Precautions for Peace Operations Personnel*](#). This update to the Ebola course provides the latest information on recent outbreaks, as well as a new lesson devoted to Ebola virus disease outbreak coordination and peace operations. The French translation of the updated Ebola course has also been released (*Maladie à virus Ebola : sensibilisation et précautions pour le personnel des opérations de paix*).

Furthermore, the Institute released two other French translations. [*L'Histoire des opérations de maintien de la paix des Nations Unies de 2000 à 2020*](#) is the first French translation of the popular POTI course providing a comprehensive overview of peace operations in the twenty-first century. [*Opérations de secours humanitaire*](#) is the French translation of the latest 2021 update to the English course, providing essential guidance on humanitarian principles, doctrine, relief activities, and examples. The Institute is pleased to continue to expand its French offerings to best support current and future *casques bleus*.

POTI continued to update and expand its gender awareness curriculum with the update to [*Preventing Violence Against Women and Promoting Gender Equality in Peace Operations*](#). In partnership with the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF), this course update includes new case studies on how peace operations personnel can promote gender equality and change attitudes and behaviours that perpetuate violence against women and girls.

The Institute also released an audiobook edition of the [*Implementation of the UN Security Council Resolutions on the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda in Africa*](#). This course, developed in collaboration with UN-Women, highlights the implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda in Africa and the importance of employing a gender perspective in peace operations to support peace and security. POTI continues to be dedicated to providing its curriculum in multiple formats to make self-paced, online, on-demand courses accessible for various learning styles.



From the Desk of the Executive Director Ramona Taheri



Over the past few weeks, the Institute has solicited your stories and photos from serving on peace operations. We are in awe of our students, as always, and delighted to share these stories to celebrate the International Day of UN Peacekeepers. It is truly an honour to work alongside this community in the service of peace.

The Institute released quite a few new, updated, and translated courses in the past few months. We extend our sincerest thanks to our partners in these projects: the World Health Organization, the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance, UN-Women, Professor Paul D. Williams of The George Washington University, Lieutenant Colonel (retired) René Wagemans, and our fantastic translators and editors.

As we all know, serving on peace and humanitarian relief operations is far from easy or comfortable. Serving in harsh conditions in unfamiliar territory with sometimes limited resources can pose grave threats to the health of those deployed. I am thus honoured to present our new course [*Health of Peace Operations Personnel*](#), created in collaboration with the World Health Organization, to help prepare personnel for deployment. The course covers a wide range of physical and mental health considerations, and I hope it proves to be a useful tool for our students in protecting and taking care of themselves while on mission.

Additionally, I encourage you to read our 2022 Annual Report to learn more about our activities, sponsors, and partners. Thank you all for your support of e-learning on topics related to peace.

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

LEARN MORE AND READ ABOUT THE
INSTITUTE'S MILESTONES AND ACHIEVEMENTS



The 2022 Annual Report of the Peace Operations Training Institute is available here: <https://cdn.peaceopstraining.org/pdf/annual-report.pdf>.

Our thanks to the founding member nations of the Partnership for E-Learning on Peace Operations (PELP) for providing the support that makes e-learning on peace operations possible.



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All the major features of the POTI online classroom are available. Internet connection typically required.

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Women in peace operations are a key to peace. POTI encourages women to enrol and study our courses.

