



**CENTRE FOR  
NATIONAL SECURITY STUDIES**

**Centre for National Security Studies (CNSS)  
M S Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences (MSRUAS)**

**EDITORIAL POLICIES AND JOURNAL GUIDELINES**

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## **Submission Guidelines**

The submission guidelines are incorporated into the CNSS Journal for National Security Studies to maintain uniformity of the scope and quality of the journal. The manuscript must be your original work and you must have the rights to the work. It is also crucial that the authors obtain and be able to supply all necessary permissions for the reproduction of any copyright works not owned by you, including figures, illustrations, tables, lengthy quotations, or other material previously published elsewhere. Please check the following submission guidelines to be accepted for reviewing and publishing.

### **1. Abstract Guidelines**

An abstract with a maximum limit of 250 words that concisely states the research problem, rationale, and purpose of the research is considered optimum for our journal. Please ensure that the abstract is written, keeping in mind the goals and objectives of engaging with an audience under the umbrella theme of security studies.

#### **1.1 Keywords**

Please include a minimum of 4-5 keywords, listed after the abstract. Keywords should be as specific as possible to the research topic. Your article title, keywords, and abstract all contribute to its position in search engine results, directly affecting the number of people who see your work.

#### **1.2 Technical Guidelines**

- i. Authors of the CNSS Journal for National Security Studies must respect copyright principles.
- ii. Employ British English as the default language.
- iii. Utilize Times New Roman font 12 with 1.5 line spacing.
- iv. Explain acronyms upon first use, followed by acronym usage.
- v. The editorial team retains the right to reject the abstracts if it is not on par with or in the thematic areas indicated by CNSS.

### **2. Research Article Guidelines**

CNSS only conforms to the submission of original research articles. The articles have a word limit between 3,000-6,000 words, including the data sets and excluding the abstract and references.

#### **2.1 Technical Guidelines**

- i. Authors of the CNSS Journal for National Security Studies must respect copyright principles.
- ii. Employ British English as the default language.
- iii. Utilize Times New Roman font 12 with 1.5 line spacing.
- iv. Cite quotes, facts, maps, charts, and data accurately.
- v. Incorporate proper endnotes or footnotes for references.
- vi. Explain acronyms upon first use, followed by acronym usage.

- vii. The editorial team retains the right to alter manuscripts for factual accuracy and content quality. Major changes involve author consent.

## **2.2 Formatting your Manuscript**

### **Title page**

Since the journal will be peer-reviewed, ensure that your manuscript is fully anonymized to conduct a fair and anonymous peer review. It is also to be confirmed by the author that any self-identifying remark is removed from the manuscript and only included in the Title Page, which will be detached temporarily when the article is sent for double-anonymized peer review. The Title Page will not be sent to peer reviewers.

The Title Page should include:

- i. Article title
- ii. The full list of authors including names and affiliations of each. In the case of the affiliations, it should be the institution where the research was conducted, analyzed, and documented. In case of a change in the institution, it may be indicated inside the manuscript in the footnote/endnote.

### *Title*

Your manuscript's title should be concise, descriptive, unambiguous, accurate, and reflect the precise contents of the manuscript. A descriptive title that includes the topic of the manuscript makes an article more findable in the major indexing services. The abstract and keywords are to be included right after the title page.

### *Tables, figures, and other graphics*

- i. The data in Tabular formats are to be done using MS Excel/MS Word.
- ii. The figures and diagrams are to be sent in TIFF/JPEG format with a minimum of 300 dpi, 1500 pixels, and a minimum width of 4 inches.
- iii. The headings for the tables, diagrams, and pictures are to be limited to two or three Heading levels. Lengthy headings are to be avoided.
- iv. For better understanding, please minimize the italics format and diacritical marks.
- v. Please ensure that you have obtained any necessary permission from copyright holders for reproducing any illustrations, tables, figures, or lengthy quotations previously published elsewhere.

### **Acknowledgments**

If you are including an Acknowledgements section, this will be published at the end of your article. The Acknowledgments section should include all contributors who do not meet the criteria for authorship.

### **Writing assistance and third-party submissions**

If the author has received any writing or editing assistance from a third party, this must be clearly stated in the Acknowledgements section and the cover letter. Please note that the journal editor reserves the right to not consider submissions made by a third party rather than by the author/s themselves. Refer to CNSS Retractions and Corrections Policy.

## **Statements and declarations**

It is required that you add a section titled 'Statements and Declarations' at the end of your submitted article, following the Acknowledgements section. Even in case a declaration is not relevant to your submission, you must still include the heading and indicate 'Not applicable' in that section. Please be aware that the Editorial Office may request an explanation of why a declaration does not apply to your submission.

### *Ethical considerations*

Please include the ethics approval statements under this section, even if you have already covered ethics approval information in your methods section. If ethical approval was not necessary, please explicitly state that. In case guidance on composing ethical statements is required, please refer to our Publication Ethics Policies page.

All papers reporting studies involving human participants or human data must state that the relevant Ethics Committee or Institutional Review Board approved the study, or waived the requirement for approval, providing the full name and institution of the review committee in addition to the approval number. If applicable, please also include this information in the Methods section of your manuscript. In case of absence of approval, the CNSS Ethics Committee will review the ethical considerations of your research article. Please refer to the CNSS Ethics Committee and Policies page to know more.

### *Consent to participate*

In this section, the author is to include any participant consent information and mention whether informed consent to participate was written or verbal. However, in certain cases where there is no threat or loss of dignity to the participant, or it is important for the research or when such content is impossible to acquire, please mention such information in detail. If 'consent of participation' does not apply to your manuscript, please state 'Not applicable' in this section. Please refer to our Publication Ethics page for more information.

### *Consent for publication*

Submissions that contain any data from a person (including individual details, images, or videos) must include a statement confirming that informed consent for publication was provided by the participant(s) or a legally authorized representative. Please confirm to us, in writing, that written informed consent to publish has been obtained. The confirmation letter may be uploaded with your submission as a separate file in addition to the statement confirming that consent to publish was obtained within the manuscript text. Please do not include the participant's actual written informed consent with your article, as it breaches the person's confidentiality. If this does not apply to your manuscript, please state 'Not applicable' in this section.

### *Declaration of conflicting interest*

The CNSS Journal requires a declaration of conflicting interests from all authors so that a statement can be included in your article. If there is no conflict of interest, your statement should read:

'The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest concerning the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article'.

### *Funding statement*

All articles need to include a funding statement, under a separate heading. This is applicable even if the author did not receive funding. In such cases, write ‘Not applicable’ and the means of funding the research work, whether it is self-funded or not.

### **Reference style and citations**

The CNSS Journal follows the APA reference style. Every in-text citation must have a corresponding citation in the reference list and vice versa. Corresponding citations must have identical spelling and year.

Authors should update any references to preprints when a peer-reviewed version is made available, to cite the published research. Citations to preprints are otherwise discouraged. Please refer to the APA guidelines to ensure your manuscript conforms.

Find the guidelines at: <https://apastyle.apa.org/>

### *EndNote*

If you use EndNote to manage references, please refer to the link: <https://web.endnote.com/>

### **2.3 Clearance for Serving Officers**

Serving officers require a ‘No Objection Certificate’ from relevant authorities as per service/office orders.

### **2.4 Copyright**

CNSS holds ‘all rights’ over its published works, preventing reproduction, distribution, or adaptation without permission.

### **2.5 Pricing**

The CNSS Journal is available in both digital and print formats. The print version is priced by CNSS.

### **2.6 Rejection Criteria**

The Editorial Team reserves the right to reject articles violating ethical norms, containing derogatory/inflammatory content, or being identified as plagiarized. Manuscripts not adhering to guidelines will be rejected or sent for rectification. Manuscripts that are resisting reasonable changes suggested by the Editorial Team shall be rejected. Plagiarism, unacknowledged copying, or misattribution of original authorship is prohibited. Duplicate publication also results in paper rejection, including self-plagiarism.

### *Plagiarism*

The Centre for National Security Studies takes issues of copyright infringement, plagiarism, or other breaches of best practice in publication very seriously. One of the major objectives of the journal is to protect the dignity of our authors and to protect the reputation of the journal against malpractices. The submitted articles will be checked for plagiarism-checking software.

CNSS does not tolerate fraudulent activities, including attempts to manipulate the peer review process and the use of submission or review farms (not legitimate third-party submission

agencies). Where CNSS has strong suspicions or evidence of such activities, unpublished contributions will be automatically disqualified from further consideration in the journal. For further information, please check the CNSS Retractions and Corrections policy.

## Authorship guidelines

### **1. Authorship Policies**

To ensure fair and transparent credit for all authors involved in the research, here are some key guidelines to consider when submitting your manuscript to a CNSS journal.

#### **1.1 Criteria for Authorship**

The authors must follow the following criteria while working on the research article:

- i. Made a significant contribution to the concept, design, acquisition, analysis or interpretation of data.
- ii. Drafted the article or revised it critically for important intellectual content
- iii. Approved the final version of the article for publication.
- iv. Agreed to be accountable for all aspects of the work and resolved any issues related to its accuracy or integrity.

#### **1.2 Author Responsibilities**

Authors who submit the manuscript to CNSS become the ‘submitting author’. Going ahead with the review and revision process, the submitting author will be the main point of contact. The submitting author is also responsible for adding the authors (in the case of a multi-author research article) who meet the authorship criteria and provide their information to CNSS.

In cases where the submitting author designates a ‘co-author’ as the corresponding author with their consent, the latter assumes responsibility for seeing their research article through the publication process.

#### **1.3 Group Authorship**

Groups of authors such as those working in consortia are encouraged in our publications. The names of the group members are to be highlighted on the title page. Those who are a part of the group of authors however do not no longer fulfil authorship standards can be indexed with inside the acknowledgements section. Please check the CNSS Submission Guidelines to learn more about what is addressed on the title page and acknowledgements.

#### **1.4 Author Affiliations**

While writing the primary affiliation for each listed author, it should be kept in mind that the institution where the research was conducted is considered as primary affiliation. In the case where there is a change of institutions during the period of research, the institution where majority of the work was done should be denoted as the affiliated institute. If an author wishes to list their current affiliation in the published article, this can be facilitated by adding a note to the article. The accuracy and validity of the author’s affiliation should be confirmed by the author(s) since such changes are not allowed during the publication process. Such changes in affiliations will also should be mentioned under the section “Declaration of Conflict Interests” in the submission.

### **1.5 Authorship changes**

Any addition or negation of authors, or changes to the list of authors must be approved by other authors already in the authors' list only after which such changes will be entertained. This process is only valid through the review process. Once finally submitted, there cannot be any changes to the list of authors.

### **1.6 Deceased Authors**

In the unfortunate situations where a co-author of the research team passes away before the publication and peer-review process, the remaining authors can use the deceased's research contribution only after approval from the latter's next of kin or a legal representative. In case the deceased was the sole author of the research work, the CNSS Editorial Board will seek permission from the next of kin or a legal representative of the deceased.

### **1.7 Authorship Disputes**

If Authorship Disputes take place during the peer-review process, the publication process will be halted until the disputes have been resolved. Such dispute resolution should be solved among the authors. If such disputes continue, CNSS reserves the right to inform the institutions to which the authors are affiliated. CNSS Journal for National Security Studies will not arbitrate any authorship disputes raised at any stage of the publication process.

### **1.8 Author Name-Change Requests**

To publish an all-inclusive journal while maintaining its dignity and integrity, CNSS recognizes changes to names and pronouns throughout the process of publication. To know more in detail, please refer to the CNSS Name Change Policy.

## **Research and Publication Ethics Policies**

The Centre for National Security Studies (CNSS) aims to publish content that meets its high standards of research acumen and publication integrity, also aimed at ensuring the accuracy, indigeneity and inclusivity of research to the people. CNSS encourages the authors, editors and reviewers to acquaint themselves with the Publication Ethics Policies to ensure that the submissions meet the standards of the journal. In case published articles are found to fall short of these standards, we will correct or retract the article according to our corrections and retractions policies.

### **1. General Research Ethics**

To ensure the conduct of an ethical study and its publication, the following points are to be considered:

- i. The authors are requested to confirm that the research work which has local relevance should be conducted in collaboration with the concerned local communities. In that process, the inclusion of local scholars is preferable, with proper authorship given to them. Please refer to the Authorship Guidelines for more information on authorship
- ii. The authors must confirm that a local ethics review was pursued and if not, please explain the reasons why (not).
- iii. It is to be mentioned whether the research work involved any risk to participants. Please describe the measures taken to ensure their safety and well-being that were agreed upon with local partners.
- iv. The authors are required to explain how the communication between the author and the participants was done to ensure that informed consent by the participants was freely given. Any potential cultural sensitivities that were explored in advance are also required to check the ethical considerations.
- v. It is compulsory that the authors confirm that all research work was conducted to the highest possible ethical standards, regardless of the requirements of the local setting.

### **2. Authorship Guidelines**

To ensure fair and transparent credit for all authors involved in the research, CNSS follows the following guidelines while considering a research article for publication. To learn more about the guidelines regarding the criteria for authorship, author roles, group authorship, author affiliations, changes and disputes related to authorship, and issues regarding deceased and incapacitated authors, please check our comprehensive Authorship Guidelines.

#### **2.1 Name Change Requests**

Please refer to the Name Change Policy for a detailed instruction.

### **3. Declaration of Conflicting Interests**

A conflict of interest can be defined as any direct or indirect interest that might influence the assessment of or conducting of the research reported in the article. Any interests within five

years before beginning the research are considered relevant. However, if any interests before this time influence the research, the authors must disclose them in this section.

To make informed judgements about the research article and its potential biases, the authors are required to disclose any direct or indirect interests that relate to their submission to any CNSS journal. The following interests may present a conflict and should be declared upon submission:

### **3.1 Financial Interests**

Whenever the author receives a grant from a funding agency or a commercial entity and such organisations benefit from the research financially, such information should be written under this section. It is also to be mentioned in this section when the researcher(s) are affiliated with or employed at an organisation that benefits from the research work. Stocks, shares, patents, patent applications or other forms of financial holdings that are likely to benefit from the publication and dissemination of the research are supposed to be declared in the ‘Conflict of Interest’ section. Any kind of payments made to the author to carry out the research and any close relatives to the author who may financially benefit from the research work should also be explained in this section.

### **3.2 Non-Financial Interests**

Affiliation to or membership at an organisation that has an interest in the outcome of the research work constitutes a non-financial conflict of interests. Such interests also include the ideology, beliefs and faith relevant to the research topic and advocacy work related to the research should be mentioned in this section. Political inclinations or legal action relevant to the research or its potential conclusion, research competition, previous personal disagreements, and close working relationships with editors and editorial board members are to be mentioned in this section. In case the authors have editorial responsibilities at CNSS or membership of the editorial board of the journal, it is to be declared as a conflict of interest.

### **3.3 Procedure of Declaration**

The author(s) should declare their conflicting interests under the heading “Declaration of Conflicting Interests” after the Acknowledgement section and preceding the sections like Funding, Notes and References. Please check our Submission Guidelines for more information.

If there are no conflicting interests, we will publish the following statement:

‘The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article’.

### **3.4 Contributor Agreement**

In the Contributor Agreement, the author will be asked to certify that:

- i. All the financial support received from commercial entities or funding agencies is acknowledged in your article.
- ii. Any commercial or financial arrangements related to your article have been discussed with your Editor, who will advise whether details should be declared.

- iii. You have not signed an agreement with any sponsor that might compromise the impartial reporting of data.

It is to be understood that the submissions will be evaluated impartially and will not necessarily be rejected when any conflicting interests are declared. If a conflict of interest of relevance and importance that was not declared by the author(s) becomes apparent at any time during the peer review or publishing process, the CNSS Editorial Board reserves the right to reject the submission.

### **3.5 Editor's Declaration**

The Editors associated with the journal's selection, scrutiny, retraction, rejection, review, and publishing process are required to declare any conflicts of interest that may impact the aforementioned process. If a conflict arises, an alternative member of the Editorial Board must be appointed and the Editor with the conflict must recuse themselves from the decision-making process. These conflicts include financial and non-financial interests listed above.

The CNSS Journal Editors or members of the CNSS Editorial Board submitting their research to their journals may do so and must declare their involvement with the journal as a conflict of interest. In such cases, the Journal Editor or Editorial Board member must recuse themselves from the peer review process and appoint another member of the Editorial Board who will invite two or more subject experts to evaluate the manuscript.

### **3.6 CNSS Editorial Board**

The Editorial Board at CNSS are required to declare their employment at CNSS as a conflict of interest in any submission they send to the CNSS journal. These submissions are treated as any other submissions within the journal.

## **4. Funding Statements**

All submissions must have a funding statement which should appear under the heading "Funding", after the "Acknowledgements" and "Declaration of Conflicting Interests" sections and before "Notes and References". For your ease, two statement examples are written below:

If funding was received, the following should be written in bold, followed by the full name of the funding agency, and the grant number in square brackets:

"The author(s) disclosed receipt of the following financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article: This work was supported by the \_\_\_\_\_ [grant agency and grant number xxxx]."

If the author(s) received grants from multiple agencies, they are required to write grant agencies and grant numbers in separate statements in the same section.

In case the research was supported indirectly by grants available to your institution, but not to the author(s) personally, simply include the statement:

"The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article."

The Declaration of Conflicting Interests and Funding Statement(s) will not be included in the document sent for the peer review process.

#### **4.1 Industry-Funded Research**

In case the research work is being funded by an industry, the author(s) must mention such collaborations in detail along with the role of such industries in the design of the study or the analysis and interpretation of the data collected. Both direct and indirect funding must be declared in this section. Indirect funding includes the monetary support received by the organisations to which the author is affiliated. It is also to be declared whether the funding is in full or in part.

In the case where the author fails to declare industry-specific funding, the CNSS Editorial Board reserves the right to reject the article. CNSS will also retract the whole article if the oversight comes to light after publication.

#### **5. Ethics approval and informed consent statements**

We ensure our high ethical standards in publishing by including clear statements in support of results reported in articles. Here are a few examples:

##### **5.1 Studies involving Humans**

All the studies that involve humans and their data must be evaluated in terms of ethical considerations. Ethics statements, apart from being mentioned in the methods section in the article body, must also be written under a separate section “Ethical Considerations”, above the “Declaration of Conflicting Interests”. Please check the CNSS Submission Guidelines for more information.

##### **Ethics Approval**

In case the author has been able to be granted ethical approval for the research work, the following examples can be used to write the ethics approval statements:

“This study was approved by the XXXX Research Ethics Committee (approval no. XYZ123) on Month DD, YYYY.”

Or, “The XXXX Ethics Review Committee at XXXX University approved our interviews (approval: XYZ123) on Month DD, YYYY. Respondents gave written consent for review and signature before starting interviews.”

In any case, if the author has not been able to get approval from their respective ethical committees, it is requested that the author(s) send the details regarding such issues to the CNSS Editorial Board via email.

##### **Participant consent**

In all cases, it is necessary to state that consent has been granted to use any personal information, and how that consent has been permitted. Informed consent includes three key components:

- i. Communication of information
- ii. Comprehension of information
- iii. Voluntary participation

Apart from mentioning it in the methods section of the research articles, the author(s) must also state in this section whether the participants provided written or verbal informed consent. This statement should also include whether the participants provided such consent with a sound mind, after understanding the details of the research, its ethical considerations and the implications such research can have on the participants. Therefore, consent from the participants has to be taken to conduct the study, publish the study, and have their photos or other images used (if necessary).

In case the identities of the participants are anonymised, they should be clearly stated too. Since the articles are being published on an open-access basis, the participants must be aware that the article will be available to anyone with an internet connection.

The American Psychological Association (APA) recommends that for those who are legally incapable of giving informed consent, researchers should:

- i. Provide an appropriate explanation
- ii. Seek the individual's assent
- iii. Consider the person's preferences and best interests

If the participant is unable to give their consent, the author(s) will need to indicate the steps taken to protect their rights and safety. The participants should be thoroughly informed about:

- i. The aim, duration, and method of the research;
- ii. The participants have the right to decline their participation. They should also be notified about the process of withdrawing from the research along with the possible consequences of doing so;
- iii. The various issues such as potential risks and adverse effects that may be expected to influence their inclination to participate in the research work;
- iv. The potential research benefits are to be communicated to the participants. Probable research outcomes must not be sugar-coated to the participants to influence their decision on consent;
- v. Any incentive to the participants is to be communicated before they take part in the research work;
- vi. The limitations of confidentiality should be communicated to the participants;
- vii. The participants should also be given the option to contact a person who can direct them especially to know and understand their (research) participation rights.

Please find the CNSS Consent Form on our website and fill up with the signatures of the participants after a thorough understanding of the nature of their participation. However, do not include the consent forms with your submission as such actions will breach the confidentiality of the participants in front of the Editorial Board and Reviewers. In situations where the CNSS Ethics Committee and Editorial Board think that ethical infringements have been committed, especially with participation consent and maintaining confidentiality, the author(s) would be specifically requested to send it to the Ethical Committee for review.

In the manuscript submitted, the author(s) should confirm that written informed consent has been acquired from the participants and that maximum confidentiality (wherever required) has been practised.

## **Ethnographic Research and Informed Consent**

Ethnographic research requires maximum adherence to the aforementioned ethical considerations. The author(s) who implement such a method of data collection have to follow the ethical guidelines prescribed by CNSS.

Given below are a few examples to write if and how consent was obtained:

i. Written informed consent

“The study was approved by the XXXX (Ethical Clearance Reference Number: XYZ123) on Month DD, YYYY. All participants provided written informed consent prior to participating.

Written informed consent can be written in this format if such consent was obtained from a legally authorised representative for anonymised participant information to be published in this article. Such clearances are also accepted if it is given by your institutional Ethics Committee undersigned by its member(s).

ii. Verbal informed consent

“Informed consent was obtained verbally before participation.”

The consent has to be audio-recorded in the attendance of an autonomous witness. In case verbal informed consent has been taken, the CNSS Ethics Committee will look into the research work to check if any ethical guideline has been breached.

iii. If consent was not obtained

“Informed consent for information published in this article was not obtained because [please state the reason].”

## **Editorial Board and Responsibilities**

The Editorial Board at CNSS shall work towards producing academically sound and valuable research work.

### **1. Editorial Board Responsibilities**

- i. The CNSS Editorial Board oversees, edits, and manages the publication process for the organization's flagship journal and all other written content.
- ii. The Board ensures the quality and adherence to guidelines for papers and articles submitted to them. Thematically, the content covers National Security, International Relations, Military Doctrine, Strategy, History, Education, and Administration. Therefore, the Editorial Board is formulated in a way that it contains scholars with expertise on these various topics.
- iii. The CNSS Editorial Board reserves the right to reject any abstract/submissions that violate the integrity of the institution and the journal.
- iv. The Board is not a member of any disputes between/among the authors, however, it reserves the right to inform the affiliated institution of such disputes.
- v. The members of the Board are required to declare their employment with the Centre for National Security Studies as a conflict of interest in any submission/research work for publication. Such submissions are not given a different treatment than the rest of the submissions.
- vi. The CNSS Editorial Board forms the CNSS Ethical Committee.

### **2. Editorial Freedom at CNSS**

To maintain the academic best practices at CNSS and further maintain its dignity as an important knowledge system on Indian National Security, the CNSS Editorial Board has full authority over the selection and peer-review process of the articles. As a publisher, CNSS has a responsibility to uphold editorial freedom and legitimate free expression supported by ethical research. The Editorial Freedom at CNSS is driven by their accountability and responsibility toward the creation of a knowledge system following the Journal's Policies and Guidelines. Commercial implications of the journals are not a motivation for editorial freedom at CNSS.

- i. The CNSS Editorial Board has full freedom in identifying and deciding which submissions should enter the peer-review process, provided such submissions are of sufficient interest or standard. The Board can also reject submissions if they are outside the journal's scope.
- ii. The decisions taken by the Editorial Board are based on the input of two independent peer-reviewers who are experts on the themes and sub-themes. After such insight from the reviewers, the Editorial Board reserves the right to assess the submission in its capacity.
- iii. Any complaint or feedback from the authors regarding the editorial process must be addressed to the Editor-in-Chief of the Journal via email.

- iv. The CNSS Editorial Board works with the Journal Editor and the Ethical Committee to jointly make decisions on the resolution of any ethical concern that is brought to the attention of the Board.

### 3. ‘Protection of Editorial Dignity’ Policy

To maintain the dignity of the CNSS Editorial Board and the experts who are a part of the review process of the submissions, CNSS follows the following policies:

- i. CNSS is committed to upholding the right to dignity and safety for the individuals at work, and any violation of that dignity, especially abusive treatment and bullying by the authors, institutions, and third-party organizations will result in immediate rejection of such submissions and their affiliations. Further steps will be taken to not engage with such entities in the future.
- ii. CNSS does not tolerate behavior and conduct that is offensive, demeaning, malicious, or insulting or anything that makes someone feel humiliated, vulnerable, or threatened. Such actions towards the CNSS Editorial Board, the Ethical Committee, and the expert peer-reviewers will meet due actions decided by CNSS.
- iii. CNSS expects that all the parties involved in the publication process will uphold and act consistently with these principles in their interactions with others. CNSS reserves the right to terminate any engagement with any agency that is determined as abusive.
- iv. CNSS may take additional, appropriate action under the circumstances.

### 4. CNSS Editorial Board

The Editorial Board at CNSS is formed of the following experts and academicians:

Name	Affiliation
Maj. Gen. J V Prasad (Retd.)	Director – CNSS
Dr. Sindhujaa Iyengar	Deputy Director (Program and Outreach)
Mr. Balasubramanian C.	Senior Research Officer
Pratyush Pran Sarma	Research Assistant
Maj. Arun Sreedharan (Retd.)	Deputy Director (Defence Technology and Innovation Programme)

### **Ethics Committee**

The Centre for National Security Studies (CNSS), to achieve its aim and objective of being a premiere, ethical knowledge system, will strictly adhere to its Research and Publication Policies. For this matter, the CNSS Ethics Committee will be responsible for evaluating and correcting the research work/manuscripts of its ethical dilemmas and considerations.

The Ethical Committee consists of the following:

Name	Affiliation
Maj. Gen. J V Prasad (Retd.)	Director – CNSS
Dr. Sindhujaa Iyengar	Deputy Director (Program and Outreach)
Mr. Balasubramanian C.	Senior Research Officer
Pratyush Pran Sarma	Research Assistant
Maj. Arun Sreedharan (Retd.)	Deputy Director (Defence Technology and Innovation Programme)

## **Peer-Review Policy**

The Peer Review process for the CNSS Journal of National Security Studies can be summarised with the following points:

- i. Transparency of Identity: Double-anonymised.
- ii. Reviewer interacts with: CNSS Open Editorial Board
- iii. Review Information: Unpublished

### **1. Stage 1 – Initial Evaluation**

The manuscripts submitted will undergo an initial evaluation by the CNSS Ethics Committee to check if the requirements written in the CNSS Guidelines are followed or not. If these violations of the guidelines are amendable, the manuscript will be returned to the author(s) with the necessary changes. The manuscripts with unchangeable infringements will be desk-rejected by the CNSS Ethics Committee as unsuitable for the Journal.

### **2. Stage 2 – Peer Review**

The research article, after the initial evaluation, will be sent for peer review. Before that, the author(s) will receive the decision taken by the CNSS Editorial Board and Ethics Committee via email, after which the decisions taken during the review will also be communicated to the author(s).

As the objective of the CNSS Journal is to contribute to the knowledge system of national security studies, we evaluate the articles based on their clarity and quality rather than the size of the article or their affiliation(s). The research work published in the CNSS Journal is aimed at building a connection between scholars to build on their respective work using our journals as a repository of knowledge. CNSS Journal evaluates submissions based on how the research was conducted and interpreted.

The following points from the peer review are highlighted for the author(s) to understand regarding the peer review process.

- i. Submissions will follow the rules and guidelines mentioned in its policies. Please go through the documents on CNSS Research and Publication Ethics, Submission Guidelines, Authorship Guidelines, Policies regarding the usage of Large Language Models (LLMs) and Generative AI, etc. Submissions defying these guidelines will be rejected before the peer review process.
- ii. CNSS prescribes and follows a serious double-anonymised review process. In such a procedure, the author(s) and the reviewer are unaware of each other's identities. It is only the CNSS Editorial Board who knows the identities and in any case whatsoever, does not reveal these identities.
- iii. The submission is peer-reviewed by two independent reviews to be sent out for publication.
- iv. The reviewer's comments to the author(s) will be written in a document and emailed to the author(s) through the office of the CNSS Editorial Board. No direct communication between the reviewer and the author(s) is allowed.

- v. The members of the Editorial Board may submit their research articles for possible publication in the CNSS Journals. In such an event, the peer review process will be operated by other members of the Board, keeping the member-author out of the decision-making process.
- vi. A final decision on publication is not taken by the reviewers. It is the CNSS Editorial Board that makes the final decision on all submissions, also including the Special Editions.

### **3. Stage 3 – Corrections**

Please read our CNSS Rejections, Retractions, and Corrections Policy to learn more regarding this process.

#### **Plagiarism**

The CNSS Editorial Board and Ethics Committee take issues of plagiarism and copyright violations very seriously. Please read the CNSS Research and Publication Ethics Policy to understand the various ethical considerations of research and the actions CNSS takes in case these considerations are breached by the author(s).

## **Rejections, Retractions and Corrections Policy**

The Rejections, Retractions, and Corrections Policy of the CNSS Journal for National Security Studies is formulated to protect the integrity of the journal and ensure impactful readability to its readers.

### **1. Rejections Policy**

The journal has the following policies related to the decision to reject a research work:

- i. The Editorial Board can reject articles violating ethical norms, containing derogatory/inflammatory content, or identified as plagiarized.
- ii. If the submissions do not adhere to the CNSS guidelines and policies, they will be rejected. In case the mistakes can be resolved and rectified, the article will be sent back to the author(s) for editing.
- iii. In case the author(s) is resisting reasonable changes to the article suggested by the CNSS Editorial Board, such articles shall be rejected.
- iv. Plagiarism, unacknowledged copying, or misattribution of original authorship is prohibited.
- v. Duplicate publication results in paper rejection, including self-plagiarism.

Please refer to the CNSS Submission Guidelines, Authorship Guidelines, Ethics, and Publication Policy to understand the points upon which CNSS reserves the right to reject an article. Such kinds of rejection usually happen during the evaluation of the abstract or at the time of submission of a complete research article when it is found that the rules of an ethical publication are not followed by the author(s).

### **2. Retractions Policy**

CNSS Retractions Policy comes into force when the selected articles are sent for the peer-review process. A research article may be retracted in the following cases:

- i. A research article will be retracted if it contains errors due to research or publication misconduct.
- ii. If the authors have not been able to resolve any disputes or issues among themselves and CNSS also fails to do so, the submission(s) will be retracted.
- iii. If the peer-review process is compromised, the submitted article will be retracted.
- iv. If authors have been unable to resolve the concerns raised in their article(s), CNSS reserves the right to retract such articles.
- v. It might be necessary for the CNSS Editorial Board and Ethics Committee to evaluate a research work, verify the author(s), and provide evidence they undertook the research themselves. In the event, that such actions have not been completed satisfactorily, CNSS reserves the right to retract such articles.
- vi. In the event the author(s) want to request a retraction of their article, such requests can be emailed to the CNSS Editorial Board. However, the Board will also evaluate such retractions to check the violation of the CNSS Guidelines and Policies and act accordingly.

- vii. CNSS does not require the approval of the author(s) while retracting their article. Such decisions are made after a thorough investigation by the Editorial Board and Ethical Committee. The decisions may be altered if new evidence comes to light.

In the cases where retraction of a research article takes place, retraction notices will be sent to the author(s) and their respective institutions explaining the reasons for retraction, linking to the original article. The author(s) will be notified by CNSS and allowed to provide comments on the retraction and the reasons. CNSS may also inform other journals or publishers if multiple articles are affected by the retracted research work. These retractions will be visible on the publishing website and the future editions of the physical copy of the published journal.

### **3. Corrections Policy**

The major objective of a Corrections Policy is to ensure that the published research work is correct and reflects the latest information available.

- i. The CNSS Journal for National Security Studies allows the author(s) to make minute corrections to their manuscript during the process of peer review and editing. These corrections may include typographical mistakes, minor data corrections, and formatting changes. Generally, the authors can make these corrections with the necessity of peer reviewing the minor edits. However, the author has to send a separate document to the CNSS Editorial Board with the details of the self-corrections. Such minor self-corrections may not be accepted after the edited manuscript is publication-ready.
- ii. In case major revisions are requested by the author(s) that change or shift a substantial amount in the research outcomes, the article will be sent again to the peer reviewer along with the latest corrections. The reviewers may suggest additional revisions, or they may recommend acceptance of the revised article.

#### **3.1 Version of Record (VoR)**

Corrections in the research article can only be done before it is published. An article, after being published in its final form, is called the “Version of Record” (VoR). After an article has been deemed as VoR, it represents that the research conducted has been complete and citable. The VoR also represents that the post-publication corrections have also been done. Once the research article is tagged as VoR, no more corrections are accepted from the author(s).

#### **3.2 Post-Publication Corrections**

Post-publication corrections are not usually entertained by CNSS. However, if such corrections impact the readability of the article, raise concerns regarding the validity and integrity of the article or defiance of the CNSS Guidelines and Directives. This is only in the cases of extreme impact.

The articles immediately after publication are read and may be cited by many and any post-publication changes will possibly impact the readers and citations from the previous version(s). Therefore, CNSS allows the author(s) to proofread their article after final review and before publication to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the research work. Post-publication corrections can be made only at the discretion of the CNSS Editorial Board, with the pretext that not all requests will be permitted.

### **3.3 Correction Notice**

To inform the author(s) regarding corrections integral to the reading, understanding, or interpreting of the article, a Correction Notice will be issued to the author(s). Correction Notices are sent out in the following cases:

- i. Pre-Publication Corrections**
  - a. The corrections required in the manuscript to provide the readers with the best possible version of the article, CNSS follows a thorough peer review process. The errors discovered during this stage and corrections to be done are sent through a Corrections Notice to the respective author(s). The process will take place simultaneously with the editorial process.
- ii. Post-Publication Corrections and Corrigendum:**
  - a. In case there is any error in factual significance, misinterpretation, or major errors, the author(s) will be sent a Correction Notice to incite a discussion and issue a corrigendum (if necessary), stressing the change and the scholarly validity behind such changes, also while maintaining the integrity of the article.
  - b. In the event there are multiple major errors or omissions in the article that may impact the validity of the research work, the CNSS Editorial Board will investigate the matter and decide upon whether a corrigendum will be written in collaboration with the author(s) and CNSS Ethical Committee. It is also up to the discretion of CNSS whether such submissions are rejected or retracted.
  - c. The minor errors in the research work may be highlighted using a footnote within the corrected article.
  - d. Complaints received by readers that risk the integrity and dignity of the research work will be investigated by the CNSS Editorial Board and the Ethical Committee. Such errors and corrections also require a discussion with the author(s) and a follow-up corrigendum to be uploaded alongside the publication.

The author(s) will constantly be in the loop when corrections and peer review processes are in motion.

### **3.4 Expression of Concern (EoC)**

In the event of misleading information or major errors in the research work, an Expression of Concern (EoC) will be issued by CNSS. Such decisions will be taken by CNSS alone, after notifying the author(s) but without their approval or agreement. CNSS may also choose to issue materials, figures, or data provided by the author(s) as part of the investigation to notify the readers of the errors and proceedings. The authors' affiliated institution or organization and the funding agency (if any) will also be notified with the EoC, especially if multiple articles are sent from scholars of one institute.

An Expression of Concern will be published by CNSS if the following issues are found:

- i. If the research article contains information that can potentially mislead our readers, the CNSS Editorial Board will issue an EoC.
- ii. If during the research work, the author(s) did not comply with the research and publication ethical conduct, CNSS will notify its readers with an EoC.

- iii. If a research work is considered by CNSS for an investigation based on a well-founded concern, an EoC is issued. Similar documents will also be issued when such investigations are ongoing and likely to take some time to resolve.

The EoC(s) will be attached to the published article(s); it may also be replaced by a corrigendum or even a retraction if the outcomes of the investigation turn out against the author(s). In the event an investigation remains inconclusive, the article will be retracted until the investigation comes to an end.

### **Journal Contributor's Publishing Agreement**

The Centre for National Security Studies (CNSS) requires the author as the rights holder of the research work to sign a "Journal Contributor's Publishing Agreement". This is necessary for all articles we publish. It is a licence agreement under which the author retains copyright in the work but grants CNSS the exclusive right and licence to publish for the full legal term of copyright.

## **Policies concerning Large Language Models and Generative AI**

### **1. Use of Large Language Models (LLMs) and Generative AI tools in writing your Research work**

While the Centre for National Security Studies (CNSS) recognises and allows the use of LLMs such as ChatGPT, and Generative AI in the initial phases of structuring the article and in the final stages of submission, we also recognise the limitations of all language models in its inability to replicate critical thinking and creativity. CNSS, therefore, puts forward the following points as guidelines for using LLMs and Generative AI in their submissions:

#### **1.1 Biased Information Based on Previous Publications**

The previously published articles throughout the history of the subject might contain biased information, racially and sexually inappropriate content and preconceived notions while studying a certain group or community. In such cases, the LLMs and Generative AI can generate biased information without contextualisation and judgement.

#### **1.2 Factual Inaccuracy Based on Previous Publications**

Since LLMs refer to information from previously published research work, there is a scope for the generation of false content in case the research work is inaccurate in its dealing with factual information and outdated normative misconceptions. This is especially true when dealing with complex or ambiguous topics.

#### **1.3 Lack of Contextual Understanding**

LLMs struggle to grasp the context of a text, particularly when handling idiomatic expressions, sarcasm, humour, or metaphorical language. Consequently, this may result in inaccuracies or misinterpretations in the content they generate.

#### **1.4 Requirement of Training Data**

Current LLMs demand substantially high-quality training data for optimal performance. Unfortunately, in certain domains or languages, such data might not be readily accessible, thereby constraining the model's utility.

### **2. Guidance for the Authors**

While implementing LLMs and Generative AI tools, the authors should have the following points in mind:

- i. The use of language models in the manuscript is to be indicated. This includes the details of the model used and the purpose of the usage. It is recommended that the author uses the 'methods' or 'acknowledgements' section to mention this information.
- ii. The authors are asked to verify the accuracy, validity, and relevance of the content and citations generated by LLMs and correct any errors or inconsistencies.
- iii. The authors must provide a list of sources used to generate content and citations. To ensure that the citations are accurate and properly referenced, the author may double-check.

- iv. It is advised to be conscious of the scope of plagiarism when LLMs are used to reproduce a substantial amount of text. The sources of such information generated should be checked as a preventive measure.
- v. The author is asked to acknowledge the limitations of LLMs in the manuscript, including the probability of bias, errors, and gaps in knowledge.

CNSS will take appropriate corrective action when we identify published articles with undisclosed use of such tools. Please refer to the Author Roles and Responsibilities for other general information.

### **3. Guidance for Editors and Reviewers**

- i. Editors and reviewers should evaluate the appropriateness of the use of LLMs and ensure that the generated content is accurate and valid.
- ii. They must uphold the confidentiality of the peer review process.
- iii. Editors must not share information about submitted manuscripts or peer review reports with LLMs or Generative AI.
- iv. Reviewers must not use AI tools to generate review reports.

### **Name Change Policy**

The Centre for National Security Studies follows the SAGE Name Change Policies and is committed to addressing the needs of all communities in research to respect their diversity, impartiality, and inclusivity. For that purpose, CNSS allows ‘name change’ and ‘pronoun change’ for the authors. This name change policy also includes ‘name changes’ due to gender (re)affirmation, religious conversion, and marriage or divorce. For this purpose, no supporting document is required.

After a ‘name change’ request has been filed with CNSS, the relevant articles will be fully replaced online with the updated credentials and their identification at sites such as Google Scholar. CNSS also ensures that the citation information such as the DOI for the article remains the same. This way, all previous citations to the paper remain valid.

In the case of the co-authors, they will be notified by CNSS regarding the ‘name change’ of the particular author with their consent, to update the way they cite the article. The author may also prefer to update such information to the co-authors themselves and is left to the discretion of the author.

Please be aware that the misspellings or errors in the author’s name in the published articles will be handled through the means of the Post-Publication Corrections Policy. Previous affiliations or changes to email addresses that are not because of changes to the author’s name will not be updated. While this policy is new and is incorporated by major Journals in our areas of study, CNSS is constantly looking for ways in which the ‘name change’ process can be made more user-friendly for the authors.

To submit your request for a ‘name change’, write an email to CNSS including the information for the following data points.

- i. Request for the name and pronoun change;
- ii. DOIs of the manuscript(s) in question;
- iii. Confirmation for CNSS to contact co-authors.

The sent email will be checked only by the Editorial Board to maintain the confidentiality and security of the author.

As with other forms of misconduct, CNSS reserves the right to investigate and act against misuse of this policy.

### **Jurisdictional Neutrality Policy**

Authors, Editors, Editorial Board members, and other individuals identified in the journal and on the CNSS website are asked to provide their institutional affiliation and country/region. This is only to identify possible 'conflict of interest'. CNSS does not discriminate against authors over geographic designations or the legal status of any country or region that may be a disputed territory.

## **Prior Publication Policy**

The author(s) must disclose information regarding any prior publication or the distribution of the manuscript to the Editor along with the submission of the article. This helps the CNSS Editorial Board to mitigate such issues before the review and publication process begins. It is important for the clarity of understanding of our readers that proper attribution is given to any prior publication so that the readers can refer to the original work. If a significant portion of the submitted article has already been published, the manuscript will not be acceptable for review and publication. However, the CNSS Editorial Board might make special decisions based on the importance and validity of the research work and consider it for publication. The author(s) has to include a description of any prior distribution of the article along with the manuscript.

### **1. Conference Abstracts and Presentations**

If the manuscripts are based on papers that have been presented at conferences, the CNSS Editorial Board allows them for review only if the presented papers have not been published and the author(s) still retains their rights to the manuscript. The Board will review if the submitted manuscript and the presented paper are not different significantly. It is also kept in mind whether such publications will enable the article to reach an audience that the conference paper did not previously reach. In case any prior publication of an abstract will not impact the eligibility for review and publication.

### **2. Preprints and Peer Review Policy**

If the manuscript submitted by the author(s) was posted on a preprint server before it was accepted by CNSS, the author(s) must include a link to the preprint version to be attached to the final published version of the research article. The author(s) must keep in mind that the CNSS Journals follow a double-anonymised peer review process. By posting the articles on the preprint server on a similar scholarly contribution, the author(s) make their identities discoverable for the reviewers. Such cases will be handled by the CNSS Editorial Board at its discretion.

### **3. Contingency Options of Publication**

While CNSS understands that the author(s) might send their article to other journals, the author(s) should refrain from posting updated versions of the research on other publications until a decision is made. This ensures that one article is not published twice and saves time for the CNSS Editorial Board to move on to the next article.

## **Post-Acceptance of Article**

After the article has been accepted and published, the CNSS Editorial Board will send an email containing the instructions to complete the Post-Acceptance process.

### **1. Contributor's Publishing Agreement**

Before the article is sent for publication, CNSS requires the author(s) to sign a Journal Contributor's Publishing Agreement as the rights holder of the article. Please find the Agreement form along with the Consent Form.

### **2. Preprints**

If the manuscript submitted by the author(s) was posted on a preprint server before it was accepted by CNSS, the author(s) must include a link to the preprint version to be attached to the final published version of the research article. The author(s) must keep in mind that the CNSS Journals follow a double-anonymised peer review process. By posting the articles on the preprint server on a similar scholarly contribution, the author(s) make their identities discoverable for the reviewers. Such cases will be handled by the CNSS Editorial Board at its discretion.

### **3. Production**

The CNSS Editorial Board ensures transparency in the process of review and publication. The review and edits pointed out by the reviewers will be made available to the respective author(s) promptly via email to avoid delay in publication. Author(s) must proofread the later versions of manuscripts (if applicable) throughout the process.

### **4. Publication**

CNSS aims to publish the accepted manuscripts fast. For that reason, the author(s) must also assume a proactive role during the review and edit process. The journal being an open-access repository, the articles will be published swiftly, online, and in a citable form with a DOI number and later into a physical copy.

### **5. Promoting your article**

The production of good articles does not just end with Publication. CNSS ensures that your article is found, read, downloaded, and cited as widely as possible. For that, CNSS uses many effective tactics to promote the research articles. Promotion of articles by the author(s) is favourable.

**Centre for National Security Studies (CNSS)****Consent Form****[Title of project]****Consent to take part in research**

- I..... voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.
- I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.
- I understand that I can withdraw permission to use data from my interview within two weeks after the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.
- I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.
- I understand that participation involves.....  
*[Outline briefly in simple terms what participation in your research will involve].*
- I understand that I might not benefit directly from participating in this research.
- I agree to my interview being audio-recorded.
- I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.
- I understand that in any report on the results of this research, my identity will remain anonymous.
- This will be done by changing my name and disguising any details of my interview that may reveal my identity or the identity of people I speak about.

- I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in..... *[List all forums in which you plan to use the data from the interview: dissertation, conference presentation, published papers, etc.]*.
- I understand that if I inform the researcher that I or someone else is at risk of harm they may have to report this to the relevant authorities - they will discuss this with me first but may be required to report with or without my permission.
- I understand that signed consent forms and original audio recordings will be retained in *[Specify the location, security arrangements, and who has access to data]* until *[specific relevant period – for students this will be until the exam board confirms the results of their dissertation]*.
- I understand that a transcript of my interview in which all identifying information has been removed will be retained for *[specific relevant period – for students this will be two years from the date of the exam board]*.
- I understand that under freedom of information legalisation, I am entitled to access the information I have provided at any time while it is in storage as specified above.
- I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information.

**Names, degrees, affiliations, and contact details of researchers (and academic supervisors when relevant).**

*Signature of research participant*

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Signature of participant

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Date

*Signature of researcher*

I believe the participant is giving informed consent to participate in this study -----  
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Signature of researcher

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Date