

Publishing Guidelines for Special Volume of Selected Papers for the Fourth UNITAR International Research Conference (4UIRC)

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Empowering Individuals and Institutions for Innovation in the Domain of Human Security, Peace, and Sustainable Development

1. Purpose and Institutional Alignment:

This document establishes the publishing requirements governing the development of the UNITAR special volume of selected papers, developed in connection with the 4th UNITAR International Research Conference (4UIRC).

The volume is being prepared by the 4UIRC coordinating team and supervised by UNITAR Communications team for potential submission to the United Nations Publications Office for consideration within its editorial programme and for possible inclusion in the UN-iLibrary, the official digital repository of United Nations publications.

The UN-iLibrary serves as a platform for formal, citable UN intellectual outputs, including peer-reviewed research volumes, analytical reports, and institutional knowledge products. It is not intended as a repository for event documentation or conference records.

Accordingly, the special volume of selected papers will be conceived not as proceedings of the 4UIRC, but as a stand-alone scholarly publication that builds analytically on conference themes in alignment with the editorial expectations of the institutions mentioned above.

Final publication on the UN-iLibrary remains subject to editorial review, institutional clearance, and the publishing priorities of the United Nations.

2. Scope and Eligibility for UN Publication:

For a manuscript to be eligible for submission to the UN Publications Office under this special volume, it must:

- Constitute a new, original intellectual output, not a reproduction of conference presentations or abstracts.
- Demonstrate substantive research, analytical depth, or policy-relevant investigation.
- Present a clearly articulated analytical framework, research problem, or policy question.
- Show explicit relevance to the Sustainable Development Goals and UN mandates, [the UN Pact for the Future and the Secretary General's New Agenda for Peace](#), particularly those emphasised by the 4UIRC.
- Be written in a formal, neutral, and scholarly style consistent with UN publication standards.
- Include complete and accurate citations and references.
- Successfully complete a documented double-blind peer review process coordinated by UNITAR.

Submissions that function primarily as conference documentation (e.g., proceedings, session summaries, compilations of abstracts, speeches, or narrative reports of the event) are not eligible for submission to the UN Publications Office or the UN-iLibrary.

Such materials may, however, be published and disseminated through alternative UNITAR channels, including UNITAR institutional repositories, conference report series, knowledge-sharing platforms, or other internal and public dissemination mechanisms, in accordance with UNITAR's communication and knowledge management policies.

3. Editorial and Structural Standards:

All manuscripts must meet standards consistent with formal UN publications, including:

3.1 Analytical Standards:

Each chapter must demonstrate:

- Defined intellectual authorship;
- A coherent conceptual, theoretical, or methodological approach;
- Engagement with relevant academic literature, empirical evidence, or UN policy frameworks;
- Critical analysis that moves beyond descriptive reporting;
- Clear articulation of findings, implications, and limitations.

3.2 Structural Standards:

Manuscripts should normally include:

- Abstract;
- Introduction and contextual framing;
- Literature or policy engagement;
- Methodology or analytical approach;
- Results, analysis, or discussion;
- Conclusion with implications for SDG implementation, policy, or practice;
- Complete references.

The edited volume must and will also include:

- A substantive editorial introduction situating the volume within UNITAR's mandate and UN priorities;
- Thematically structured sections;
- Integrative framing that demonstrates coherence across contributions.

4. Peer Review and Institutional Clearance:

- Under the coordination of UNITAR, the conference Editorial Board is entrusted with responsibility for the academic and technical integrity of the volume, including abstract selection, management of peer review, and editorial recommendations;
- It is common practice in some edited research volumes and special issues for members of the Editorial Board to also contribute manuscripts, provided that [strict conflict-of-interest safeguards are applied](#). Where an Editorial Board member submits a manuscript, all aspects of the editorial and peer-review process for that submission shall be managed independently by the UNITAR Editorial coordination team or a designated non-conflicted editor. The Editorial Board member concerned shall not participate in the handling, review coordination, discussion, or decision-making related to their submission. Such manuscripts shall be subject to the same double-blind peer-review procedures and acceptance criteria as all other contributions.
- All chapters will undergo double-blind peer review by at least two independent experts, part of the 4UIRC Editorial Board;
- Reviews will be formally documented and archived in accordance with UN editorial expectations;
- Authors must complete substantive revisions addressing reviewer and editorial feedback;
- Final manuscripts will be subject to the review of the Editorial Board;
- Under the coordination of UNITAR, the conference Editorial Board is entrusted with responsibility for the academic and technical integrity of the volume, including abstract selection, management of peer review, and editorial recommendations;

- Only manuscripts formally accepted into the UN editorial programme are eligible for:
 - ISBN assignment
 - DOI registration
 - Inclusion in the UN-iLibrary

5. Relationship to 4UIRC Outputs:

While the 4UIRC provides the intellectual foundation for this initiative, the special volume must reflect a distinct editorial process and scholarly standard.

Conference materials may continue to be disseminated through UNITAR's institutional platforms. However, the special volume must:

- Transform conference-inspired contributions into analytically mature research outputs;
- Situate them within broader global, regional, and thematic debates;
- Demonstrate lasting relevance beyond the temporal context of the conference.

6. Special Editorial Orientation for the 4UIRC Volume:

In line with the objectives of the 4UIRC, contributions to this special volume should:

- Bridge knowledge production with action-oriented insight;
- Address interdisciplinary challenges related to education, climate action, peacebuilding, partnerships, humanitarian response, youth engagement, and institutional capacity development;
- Reflect the diversity of contexts, regions, and approaches represented at the conference;
- Demonstrate relevance to UN policy priorities and SDG implementation pathways.

The volume aims to serve as a substantive UNITAR knowledge product aligned with the standards and mission of the UN-iLibrary.

7. Technical Publishing Guidelines (UN Publications and Peer-Reviewed Standards):

This section establishes the technical, stylistic, and documentary requirements for all manuscripts submitted. These guidelines align with expectations of the United Nations Publications Office and internationally recognised standards for peer-reviewed academic publishing.

7.1 Manuscript:

a) Length and Structure

Each manuscript must include:

- Title
- Author name(s) and affiliation(s)
- Abstract (150–250 words)
- 4–6 keywords
- Main text with clearly numbered headings
- Conclusion or policy/practice implications section
- Complete reference list
- Number of words (including references)

Unless otherwise approved by the Editorial Board:

- Each chapter (individual paper) should normally range between 6,000 and 8,500 words, inclusive of references.

b) Style and Language

Each manuscript must include:

- Manuscripts must be written in formal, neutral, and inclusive English, consistent with United Nations editorial style;
- Language should be precise, accessible, and non-advocacy in tone;
- Acronyms must be spelled out at first mention;
- Terminology should be used consistently across the manuscript;
- Authors are encouraged to avoid unnecessary jargon and to define technical terms;
- All submissions are subject to professional copy-editing to ensure consistency and quality.

c) Formatting and Layout Requirements

At the time of submission, manuscripts must comply with the following formatting requirements:

- **Font:** Arial
- **Font size:** 11-point
- **Text alignment:** Left-aligned
- **Line spacing:** Single or 1.15 (consistent throughout)
- **Margins:** Standard (2.5 cm / 1 inch)
- **Page numbers:** Bottom right
- **Headings:** Clearly numbered and consistently formatted
- **Footnotes:** Discouraged; use in-text citations where possible

These formatting requirements are established to ensure consistency, readability, and comparability across all submissions during the editorial and peer-review process. Standardisation at this stage helps minimise technical inconsistencies, facilitates efficient review by the Editorial Board, and supports the coordination of the volume as a whole.

7.2 Citations and References:

- All manuscripts must use an Author–Date Citation System, consistent with the [UN Editorial Manual](#) and [APA \(7th edition\)](#);
 - In-text citations: (*Author, Year*)
 - Reference list: alphabetical order by author/institution at end of manuscript
- In cases of uncertainty or where specific formatting issues are not addressed in these Guidelines, authors should consult the [United Nations Editorial Manual](#). Where the UN Editorial Manual and APA (7th edition) differ, UN Editorial Manual conventions and institutional usage shall take precedence;
- All factual statements, data, and quotations must be supported by appropriate references;
- Authors are encouraged, where relevant, to engage with UN reports, international policy frameworks, and SDG-related documentation, alongside academic literature;
- Reference lists must be complete, accurate, and formatted consistently;
- Authors are responsible for verifying all citations.

7.2.1 Common in-text citations (examples):

- Single author: (Zembylas, 2025)
- Two authors: (Khan & Müller, 2022)
- Three or more authors: (Coetzer et al., 2025)

- Multiple sources: (UNDP, 2021; UNITAR, 2025)
- Direct quotations (include page number): (UNESCO, 2023, p. 14)

7.2.2 Reference list:

- Should start on a new page titled: References;
- Alphabetical order by first author/institution;
- Use hanging indent;
- Include DOIs or stable URLs where available (including the date in which you have last accessed it);
- Ensure all in-text citations appear in the reference list and vice versa.

7.2.3 Common reference formats (examples):

• Journal article:

- Zembylas, M. (2025). Building peace through lifelong learning: Past research and future agendas. *International Review of Education*, 71, 899–915. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11159-025-10148-3>

• Book:

- Leal Filho, W., Rebelatto, B. G., Annelin, A., & Boström, G.-O. (Eds.). (2025). *Competence building in sustainable development*. Springer Cham. ISBN978-3-031-80380-2

• Chapter in edited volume:

- Coetzer, J.-H., Morales, L., Flynn, P., Pop, L., Barkoczi, N., Munteanu, S., Campian, C., & Rajmil, D. (2023). *Enhancing human security by transforming education through science, technology, and innovations*. In Special Issue on Human Security (Vol. 5, Issue 1, pp. 7–20). Cadmus Journal. <https://unitar.org/sites/default/files/media/file/Special%20Issue%20on%20Human%20Security.pdf>

• UN or institutional report (corporate author):

- United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR). (2025). *Conference proceedings of the Second UNITAR International Research Conference: Our common agenda and the role of higher education in conflict, peace, and development: UN 2.0*. Technical University of Sofia Publishing House / UNITAR.
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (2023). *Human development report 2023–2024*. United Nations.
- Atlantic Centre. (2025) Atlantic Centre Course Report: V Maritime Security Course - Climate Change and Security Challenges in the Atlantic. https://www.defesa.gov.pt/pt/pdefesa/ac/CMS/2025/Documents/VCSM_AC_COURSE_REPORT.pdf

• UN resolutions/official documents:

- United Nations General Assembly. (2015). *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*.

• Website:

- United Nations, *Artificial intelligence*, United Nations website. Available at: <https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/artificial-intelligence> (last accessed 23/01/2026).

7.3 Data, Evidence, and Transparency:

- Empirical and practice-based manuscripts must clearly describe data sources, analytical methods, and research design;
- Authors must indicate any limitations of the data or analysis;
- Where applicable, authors should specify whether underlying data can be accessed, subject to ethical and confidentiality considerations;
- All statistical, qualitative, or documentary evidence must be presented in a transparent and verifiable manner.

7.4 Figures, Tables, and Illustrative Material:

- All figures and tables must be clearly numbered, titled, and referenced in the text;
- Each must include a source note, even where the author is the source;
- High-resolution and editable versions must be provided separately;
- Authors are responsible for securing written permission for any third-party material prior to final acceptance;
- Visual materials must meet UN technical standards for reproduction and accessibility.

7.5 Research Ethics and Author Declarations:

All manuscripts must be accompanied by:

- A declaration of originality;
- Disclosure of funding sources and relevant institutional affiliations;
- Confirmation of ethical compliance, where research involves human participants, communities, or sensitive data;
- A statement of any actual or potential conflicts of interest;

Note: Manuscripts that do not meet ethical requirements will not be accepted.

7.6 Anonymisation for Double-Blind Peer Review:

- All manuscripts submitted for peer review will be fully anonymised;
- Author names, affiliations, acknowledgements, and self-identifying references will be removed from the review version;
- A separate title page containing all author-identifying information must be submitted as a standalone file. This document will be retained exclusively by the Editorial Coordination team and will not be shared with peer reviewers, in order to preserve the integrity of the double-blind review process;
- Failure to comply may result in delays or return of the manuscript.

7.7 Revision Process and Version Control:

- Authors invited to revise their manuscripts must submit a point-by-point response to each reviewer comment and provide a revised version of the manuscript with all changes clearly indicated using track changes;
- All substantive changes must be clearly indicated;
- Multiple rounds of revision may be required;
- All manuscript versions, reviews, and editorial decisions will be formally archived by UNITAR to ensure transparency and accountability;

7.8 Academic Integrity, Plagiarism, and Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence:

a) Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct: All manuscripts submitted to the 4UIRC special volume must comply with internationally recognised standards of academic integrity.

- Submissions must be entirely original and properly cite all sources (this includes images graphics or any kind of visual aid);
- Plagiarism, including self-plagiarism, data fabrication, falsification, and misrepresentation, is strictly prohibited;
- Manuscripts may be subject to plagiarism screening and editorial investigation.
- Confirmed cases of misconduct will result in rejection or withdrawal.

b) Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI): Consistent with the United Nations system's emphasis on the ethical, transparent, and responsible use of artificial intelligence, the use of AI-assisted tools in manuscript preparation is permitted only under clearly defined conditions.

- Authors must disclose any use of AI tools in the preparation of their manuscripts;
- AI tools may be used only in a supportive capacity (e.g., language editing, formatting, or data handling);
- AI tools must not be used to generate or fabricate research data, produce substantive scholarly analysis, or misrepresent authorship;
- Human intellectual oversight and author accountability are mandatory. Authors remain fully responsible for the content of their manuscripts.

Note: Failure to comply with these requirements may result in rejection, withdrawal, or further editorial or institutional action.

7.9 Institutional Clearance:

Prior to institutional clearance and any potential submission to the United Nations Publications Office, or other publishing partner, all chapters must:

- Fully comply with these Technical Publishing Guidelines;
- Demonstrate substantive incorporation of peer-review feedback;
- Be linguistically and structurally publication-ready;
- Have all permissions and ethical declarations finalised;
- Be harmonised across the volume in style, structure, and referencing.

Only manuscripts meeting these requirements may proceed to UNITAR's internal clearance processes and, where appropriate, onward submission to the UN Publications Office for editorial consideration.

7.10 Submission Procedure and File Organisation:

To ensure an efficient, transparent, and standardised editorial and peer-review process, all authors must submit their materials in accordance with the following submission and file-organisation requirements.

All submissions must be provided electronically via the submission channel communicated by UNITAR. Submissions sent through alternative channels or in non-compliant formats may be returned for correction.

Authors are strongly encouraged to submit these materials as separate files via email, either:

- bundled together in a single compressed (zipped) folder (preferred), or
- attached individually as separate files.

Each submission must include the following components:

a) Manuscript (Word file): A version of the manuscript prepared for double-blind peer review, containing no identifying author information.

- YYYY-MM-DD_Manuscript_Title_v1_CorrespondingAuthorInitials
(e.g.,) **2026-01-30_Manuscript_ClimateResilience_v1_JD.docx**

b) Title page (separate Word file): A standalone document containing *Title, Author name(s) and affiliation(s), Abstract (150–250 words), 4–6 keywords.*

- YYYY-MM-DD_TitlePage_Title_v1_CorrespondingAuthorInitials
(e.g.,) **2026-01-30_TitlePage_v1_ClimateResilience_JD.docx**

c) Visual References: All figures, tables, and illustrative materials submitted as separate files, in accordance with Section 7.4.

Each file must:

- Correspond exactly to the figure or table number and title used in the manuscript;
- Be provided in the highest resolution available;
- Be submitted in JPG or PNG extension.
- **File naming convention:** Files must follow the structure of Number_Title.ext. Examples:
 - 01_SDG_16_Peace_Justice_and_Strong_Institutions.jpg
 - 02_Framework_for_SDG_Integration.png

d) Ethical and author declarations: Any required declarations of originality, ethical compliance, funding disclosure, conflicts of interest, and responsible use of AI, as outlined in Section 7.5.

7.10.1 File Organisation and Version Control:

All files must be clearly named, consistently formatted, and logically organised to facilitate peer review, editorial handling, and institutional archiving.

Authors are responsible for ensuring that:

- All required components are included at the time of submission;
- File names accurately reflect content and correspond to manuscript references;
- The submission complies fully with these Guidelines.

Incomplete or non-compliant submissions may result in delays, requests for resubmission, or exclusion from the review process.

UNITAR reserves the right to request revised files, renamed documents, or additional documentation at any stage of the editorial and institutional clearance process.

7.11 Submission of Materials:

All manuscripts and accompanying materials must be submitted electronically. Submissions should be via email:

a) Under the subject line:

- 4UIRC: Special Volume Submission

b) Sent to:

- elearning.ptp@unitar.org

c) CCing:

- jon-hans.coetzer@unitar.org
- alexandra.severino@unitar.org
- ana.moreira@unitar.org

d) Authors may submit the files:

- as individual attachments, or
- a combination of individual files and a compressed (zipped) folder containing visual materials (strongly recommended).

The editorial process is led by:

- **Editor-in-Chief:** Dr Jon-Hans Coetzer (Jon-Hans.COETZER@unitar.org)

And supported by:

- **Editorial Coordinator:** Alexandra Severino (Alexandra.SEVERINO@unitar.org)
 - **Creative Editor and Outreach Support Focal:** Ana Moreira (Ana.MOREIRA@unitar.org)
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