

The Law and Reality of the Responsibility to Maintain International Peace and Security

Call for Papers Publication Workshop

8th June 2026
University of Liverpool
School of Law and Social Justice

Dear colleagues,

You are warmly invited to submit proposals for a publication workshop as part of the research project: The Law and Reality of the Responsibility to Maintain International Peace and Security.

Following an initial scoping workshop for the research project in November 2025, we are now seeking full chapter proposals for an edited collection focused on seeking to understand the law and reality of the responsibility to maintain international peace and security at the United Nations.

A full publication workshop will be hosted at the University of Liverpool on 8th June 2026.

Call for papers

We are seeking authors to contribute papers or chapters to an edited collection that will form the conceptual framework for Strand 1 of the project, as set out in Annex 1 of the document.

We are seeking proposals for chapters to contribute to the collection in the following areas:

- The legal nature of the responsibility to maintain international peace and security in the UN Charter, whether under Article 24(1) of the Charter or elsewhere
- Other legal sources of the responsibility to maintain international peace and security
- Political commitments outlining states' or the UN's responsibilities to maintain peace and security including, but not limited to, the responsibility to protect
- The overlap, if any, between human rights obligations and the responsibility to maintain peace and security

- The practical application of the responsibility to maintain peace and security within the United Nations, including informal working methods, guidance, or practices
- Policy and practitioner perspectives of the reality of the nature of the responsibility to maintain international peace and security
- Formal or informal structures that influence the content and implementation of the responsibility to maintain international peace and security

To submit a proposal, please send a proposed title, a 300-word abstract, and short biography to:

Dr Patrick Butchard, email: butcharp@edgehill.ac.uk and
 Dr Ben Murphy, email: hsbmurph@liverpool.ac.uk

Timeframes

Call deadline	31 st March 2026
Decision on participation by	10 th April 2026
Publication workshop	8 th June 2026
Submission of full paper	1 st December 2026

Draft papers will be presented at the workshop in presentation form.

About the wider research project

This research project seeks to establish a network of experts, practitioners, policy stakeholders, and UN colleagues to address a core question: What is the legal nature of the international obligation to maintain peace and security? We will investigate this by exploring two key issues:

- The legal nature of the responsibility to maintain international peace and security, as recognised in Article 24(1) of the United Nations Charter
- The reality of how this responsibility is perceived, implemented, and actioned within the United Nations itself

More information and context about this project are [set out on the project website](#), alongside summaries of the previous Workshop.

The publication workshop is designed to achieve the following objectives:

1. Presentations and feedback on proposed chapters for the planned edited collection.
2. An update on the proposal to publisher
3. The refinement of research questions of the wider project, including a detailed consideration of the best approach to producing the mapping exercise.
4. Potentially identifying additional partners.

Contact:

Dr Patrick Butchard, email: butcharp@edgehill.ac.uk and
Dr Ben Murphy, email: hsbmurph@liverpool.ac.uk

Practical arrangements

The workshop will take place in-person at the University of Liverpool on 8th June 2026.

The event will be held in the Events Space, Law and Social Justice Building, University of Liverpool

Unfortunately, we are unable to support any travel or accommodation at this point.

If you are unable to attend in person, we will consider participation online for those needing to travel internationally. It is a preference that we participate in-person to facilitate idea sharing and discussion throughout the day.

Future Workshops

This workshop is the second in a series of events planned for the 2025-2026 academic year. Future workshops will be held to discuss Strands 1 and 2 of the project in greater detail. Strand 1 focuses on the conceptual framework, while Strand 2 maps the legal and non-legal sources of the responsibility. Those who have expressed interest in being involved will receive invitations to these upcoming events.

Annex 1 – The Law and Reality Project – mapping the responsibility to maintain international peace and security at the United Nations

The law of the responsibility to maintain international peace and security

This research project seeks to establish a network of experts, practitioners, policy stakeholders, and UN colleagues to address a core question: What is the legal nature of the international obligation to maintain peace and security? We will investigate this by exploring two key issues:

- The legal nature of the responsibility to maintain international peace and security, as recognised in Article 24(1) of the United Nations Charter
- The reality of how this responsibility is perceived, implemented, and actioned within the United Nations itself

The powers of the United Nations and the options available to the UN Security Council for maintaining international peace and security have been widely studied. However, the legal and political nature of this responsibility has not been explored in the depth proposed by this research project. The core members of this project have been at the forefront of developing the study of this responsibility, and intend to expand our network of expertise, to allow us to delve further into this issue with greater depth and a robust approach.

This project proposes to be the first part of a dedicated study of the legal origins, existing obligations, and policy practices that directly address or influence the responsibility to maintain international peace and security.

Mapping the legal framework

While existing academic research covers various aspects of how the UN functions and how international peace and security can be achieved, this project is unique in its core focus. We will specifically map the responsibility to maintain international peace and security to the UN's existing legal and political structures. This dedicated study will provide a clear and detailed overview of the responsibility, its legal sources, and the political frameworks that impact its implementation. Ultimately, we hope this will help us to understand how the responsibility is viewed in both law and the practical reality at the UN.

The project commits to a dedicated study to provide a clear and detailed overview of the responsibility, its sources, and the policy / political frameworks that impact its implementation.

The legal framework will detail the relevant legal obligations that uphold or support the implementation of the maintenance of international peace and security, such as:

- The legal status of the responsibility in the UN Charter, (starting with Article 24(1));
- Any subsequent agreement and practice of states relating to the responsibility;
- Obligations from other treaties or customary sources;
- Overlaps with positive human rights obligations.

The framework would also set out non-legal sources of responsibilities, guidance, and policy that complement the maintenance of international peace and security. This will include an investigation into whether and how:

- the responsibility is supported by other responsibilities, such as the 'Responsibility to Protect';
- the responsibility is supported by the mandates of organisations, or organisational policies and procedures;
- the responsibility is influenced by more informal frameworks between states, such as sanctions coordination, or the agreed outcomes of state groupings (e.g. G7, G20, BRICS).

The aim is to produce a detailed, accessible resource for academics, policymakers, and other relevant actors.

Building on previous research and expertise

Building on research undertaken members of the team, this project seeks to bring together an extensive collection of expertise to consider the viability of such a mapping exercise, build the research framework for producing this, and ultimately prepare a collection of research papers to provide the foundation for future fieldwork to confirm the real-world application and implementation of these findings.

While there are numerous existing studies into the operation of the UN (e.g. Hans Kelsen, Simma's Commentaries on the UN Charter, Butchard's [*Responsibility to Protect and the Failures of the UN Security Council*](#), and recent articles by [Murphy](#) and [Pezzano](#)), there has not yet been such a dedicated and detailed investigation into the sources, legal nature, and implementation of the responsibility to maintain international peace and security. This project builds on those existing contributions to develop a broader understanding of the legal framework underpinning this core responsibility for peace and security.

Connecting academia and policy

The project will bridge the gaps between the academic legal and theoretical expertise on this subject and the actual practice and policy of those at the UN – connecting the concepts of the law to the work of stakeholders. This will

illuminate important, but unexplored, practices at the UN, and offer an opportunity for understanding areas of best practice when responding to threats to international peace and security.

At a time where states are seeking clarity on how the UN can be more effective in its work, this project will produce knowledge that will enable policymakers to better navigate the political challenges required to discharge the responsibility to maintain international peace and security.

With this in mind, this project aims to reach beyond academia, making its findings accessible to stakeholders and the public. We aim to produce condensed briefings and multimedia outputs for policymakers, states, and UN stakeholders, in addition to robust academic publications.

[Get in touch – connect with the Project](#)

Project Strands

- Strand 1 – Concept: Identifying and defining the conceptual framework for the responsibility to maintain international peace and security.
- Strand 2 – Law: Mapping the legal framework of the responsibility to maintain international peace and security to legal and non-legal sources.
- Strand 3 – Reality: mapping the reality – the real-world implementation of the responsibility to maintain international peace and security at the UN.

Latest news

The team will be convening a series of workshops over the 2025-2026 academic year to discuss Strands 1 and 2 of the project. If you have expressed interest in being involved, you will receive invitations to these workshops in the coming months.

To express your interest, or stay in touch, please contact Dr Patrick Butchard at butcharp@edgehill.ac.uk