

DR. SUNOOR VERMA

Health Diplomacy Strategist

*Surgeon turned strategist.
From operating theatres to peace tables.*

Keynote Speaker

High-Level Moderator

Strategic Advisor

**Most people who talk about global health
have read about it.**

A few have worked inside it.

Sunoor Verma has spent a career building the systems, seeing where they fail, and being honest about the distance between the two. His work spans South Asia, Southeast Asia, Southeast Europe, Western Europe, North Africa, the Gulf, and Australia.

51+

Projects

8

Sectors

6

Regions

25+

Years

WHO | UNICEF | UNHCR | UNDP | UN Women | Cambridge | Boston University | Qatar Foundation

Biography

Sunoor Verma trained as a cardiothoracic surgeon. The operating theatre taught him precision, composure under pressure, and an intolerance for systems that fail the patient at the last step. He carried all three into the work that followed.

Over the past three decades he has advised WHO, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNDP, and UN Women on strategy, leadership communication, and coalition building. He led Track II peace processes in Kosovo, Macedonia, and Sri Lanka. He managed emergency responses to the Tsunami, Avian Influenza, and COVID-19. He served as Executive Director of the Geneva Health Forum and spent five years teaching global health at Boston University.

During the COVID-19 pandemic he coached four Health Ministers and trained over 500 parliamentarians in crisis communication across seven provinces. He currently serves as Director of Partnerships and Advocacy at the World Innovation Summit for Health, Qatar Foundation.

He is also a writer, published in The Wire, Scroll India, and Hindustan Times, and the concept creator and Series Editor of the Namaste Series: eleven books of inspiring stories from the Global South.

MPH, Brunel University

Public Health, UK

PG Diploma, University of Essex

International Education, UK

Masters in Surgery

Medical University, Varna

MBBS

Medical Academy, Sofia

Executive Director

Geneva Health Forum, 2011-2015

Faculty, Global Health

Boston University, 2015-2019

Series Editor

Namaste Series, 11 books

Honorary President

Keynote Speaking

Not a summary of existing knowledge. An argument, grounded in three decades of working inside the systems most conferences only describe from the outside. Audiences leave with a specific, unsettling, and useful idea they did not have when they arrived.

The Policy Hamster Dilemma

Why global health frameworks keep failing the South, and what to do about it

What the Surgeon Saw

Lessons from the operating theatre for leaders who design health systems from the outside

Communication Is the Intervention

Why crisis leadership fails when it is needed most, and the principles that change that

Whose Knowledge Counts?

The Global South as author, not subject: a provocation and a practical agenda

The Diplomat's Diagnosis

Health, power, and the art of building coalitions that outlast the funding cycle

LOGISTICS

Formats	Keynote · Keynote + Q&A Fireside · Workshop / Masterclass
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Duration	30 to 90 minutes
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Languages	English (primary) Hindi (selected audiences)
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Audience	20 to 2,000+
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Travel	International · Based in Doha
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Lead time	Minimum 6 weeks preferred
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The question the agenda did not include.

Most panels fail for the same reason. The moderator is underprepared, the panellists are over-scripted, and the audience leaves with nothing they could not have read in the briefing paper. Good moderation is a specific skill. It requires deep subject preparation, the ability to read a room in real time, a willingness to interrupt politely and persistently, and a commitment to the audience's time over the panellist's ego.

Preparation that exceeds the panellists

Every session is preceded by deep briefing on the topic, the panellists, and the specific tensions the conversation needs to surface. The right question comes from reading everything.

The question the agenda avoided

The most useful thing a moderator can do is ask the question the agenda was designed to avoid. Done carefully, not provocatively. There is a difference.

Control without control

Sessions are carefully steered, pacing managed, digressions closed, the thread kept taut, while feeling free and alive to the audience.

Multilingual and multicultural range

Extensive experience moderating sessions with participants from 15 or more countries, navigating the politics of institutional hierarchy in the room.

MODERATION FORMATS

Panel Sessions

Three to five panellists. Conference plenary or breakout. 45 to 90 minutes.

Fireside Conversation

One or two guests. Conversational depth. Significant pre-work with the guest.

High-Level Closed Dialogue

Eight to twenty participants. Off the record. Chatham House rules.

Ministerial and Diplomatic

Government ministers, UN heads, ambassadors. Formal register. Specific protocols.

Track Record

51+

Projects Delivered

8

Sectors

6

Regions

500+

Leaders Trained

11

Books Edited

5

UN Agencies

BY SECTOR



BY REGION



TIMELINE

1999–2004

Balkans, Macedonia, Kosovo, Sri Lanka

2005–2010

Malaysia, Singapore, Australia, Germany

2011–2016

Geneva, Switzerland: GHF, Boston University

2017–2022

Nepal, Thailand, WHO Geneva

2023–2025

Nepal, Malaysia, Geneva, Doha, Qatar

Consulting, not contracting.

Sunoor Verma takes on a small number of advisory engagements each year. These are sustained relationships with organisations navigating a genuine strategic challenge, not short-term assignments where the work begins and ends with a report.

Strategic Communication and Positioning

For organisations who need to communicate a complex mandate clearly, build credibility with a new audience, or navigate a reputational challenge without retreating into corporate language.

Coalition and Partnership Architecture

For initiatives that need to bring together governments, UN agencies, civil society, and the private sector around shared purpose rather than shared budgets.

Health Diplomacy Strategy

For governments, foundations, and multilateral organisations working at the intersection of health and geopolitics, including South-South cooperation and pandemic preparedness diplomacy.

Leadership Communication Coaching

For ministers, directors, and institutional heads who speak on behalf of complex mandates to difficult audiences. Practical, direct, and grounded in real situations rather than communication theory.

PUBLISHED AUTHOR AND SERIES EDITOR

Writing and the Namaste Series

"The Global South does not need more frameworks. It needs fewer people writing them and more people reading what was already there."

THE WRITING

Opinion and analysis on global health, institutional power, diplomatic practice, and the politics of knowledge in the Global South.

Published in The Wire, Scroll India, The Himalayan Times, and Hindustan Times.

A first solo book is currently in progress.

The Health Diplomat

Podcast · Society and Culture · Fortnightly

THE NAMASTE SERIES

Eleven books of contemporary inspiring stories from the Global South, conceived and edited by Sunoor Verma.

Built on a simple conviction: that the Global South produces extraordinary people navigating extraordinary circumstances, and that mainstream publishing has almost entirely failed to notice.

The series was designed to bring these stories into international school libraries and global classrooms.

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READY TO SPEAK, MODERATE, OR ADVISE.

Speaking Enquiry

For conference programme chairs, summit curators, and event producers seeking a keynote or fireside session.

[Speaking Enquiry Form](#) → sunoor.net

Moderation Enquiry

For conveners of panels, plenaries, and high-level dialogues seeking an experienced moderator.

[Moderation Enquiry Form](#) → sunoor.net

Advisory Enquiry

For senior leaders and institutional heads considering a sustained advisory relationship.

[Advisory Enquiry Form](#) → sunoor.net