

# Middle East panelists discusses regional issues

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## Middle East panelists discusses regional issues to SRO audience

Informed insights about disputed border regions, economic reliance on oil, nuclear weapon proliferation, and the severe lack of water, created a forum for learning for the U.S. students who packed Wil Washcoe Auditorium for the first of two Middle East International Fellows Panels.

With standing room only on Wednesday Oct. 22, Army War College Fellows from 10 countries including Lt. Col. Mohammad Abdullah of Kuwait, Lt. Col. Marwan Azar of Lebanon, Col. Tareq Mubarak of Bahrain, Col. Naif Al Taimni of Saudi Arabia, and Col. Suhail Mohamed of Al Seraidi UAE, took questions from students and faculty members regarding strategic issues facing the Mid-East region.

The panel also included Brig. Gen. Anwar Ayasrah of Jordan, Brig. Gen. Naushad Kayani of Pakistan, Lt. Col. Abdullah Halim of Afghanistan, Col. Alaa Al Shaikhli of Iraq, and Lt. Col. Eliezer Toledano of Israel, began with a briefing that highlighted issues in three main categories: geography, demography, and religion.

Geography is significant for two resources facing strong scrutiny in the region, oil and water. The panel suggested a problematic future for Mid-East countries as the global demand for oil increases. Since oil remains the only valid resource in the region, growing demand and a finite supply may put regional economic stability into question in the near future, noted one fellow.

The briefing dedicated several minutes to the water crisis in the region. With the population increasing in the region, demand rises, and diplomatic efforts should be tackled to negotiate water rights.

Following the briefing, students took advantage of the opportunity to explore topics out of the headlines.

Additionally, all panelists voiced their main concern in the region as it relates to their respective country. Overwhelmingly, fellows noted wariness about Iran's advancements to acquire nuclear weapons. Several fellows repeated that weapons of mass destruction would only further damage

stability in the region.

U.S. Army War College Archives - News Article - 04 November 2008