

International peacekeeping community hosted by Army's Peacekeeping & Stability Operations Institute

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A global set of Army War College alumni, classes 1987-2008, play key roles in the peacekeeping community gathered in Carlisle for the first U.S.-based conference of the International Association of Peacekeeping Training Institutes. Front row, l to r, retired Col. William Martinez, U.S. Army; retired Col. Daniel Pike, USA; USAWC Commandant Maj. Gen. Gregg Martin;

retired Lt. gen. Hasan Chowdhury, Bangladesh; Maj. Gen. Jorge Pena, Ecuador; Col. Lorelei Coplen, USA. Back row, l to r, retired Col. Christopher Holshek, USA; retired Lt. Gen. Joseph Inge, USA; Nicholas Seymour, UK; Jeffrey Stefani, USA; retired Col. Scott Wuestner, USA; Col. Timothy Loney, USA; IAPTC president Col. Clifford Crofford, USA. PKSOI sponsored the conference.

Nov. 22, 2011 -- Recent years brought a proliferation of training efforts to allow the “blue helmets” of United Nations peace missions to deploy and operate more effectively. The first U.S.-based conference of the International Association of Peacekeeping Training Centers created time and space to look at how to better communicate and coordinate across the 60-plus centers and international organizations.

The weeklong conference at the U.S. Army War College in Carlisle, Pa. was hosted by the U.S. Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute. An original member of the 16-year-old international association, the PKSOI is a partner in the interagency and multinational process to develop doctrine and share lessons learned from diverse peacekeeping missions. U.S. Army Col. Clifford Crofford, director of the Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute, closed the conference Nov. 18 as the IAPTC president for the coming year.

The 2011 IAPTC president and commandant of the Bangladesh Institute of Peace Support Operations Training, Brigadier General Imamuzzaman, opened the conference with a challenge to the participants. “Greater harmony in training approaches is needed to prepare for difference in doctrine, operational mindset, and experience in social and cultural diversity among the blue helmets,” he said.

As long as peacekeeping is a fundamental tool to obtain international peace and security, there is a corresponding responsibility for continuous innovation in the field of training for peacekeepers, he said.

“The challenges of training and education need to be mission specific, and yet the mission specificity and training should not overrule the need for standardization,” said Imamuzzaman. Comprehensive training enables the peacekeepers to jointly function in a complex multidimensional setting to achieve the ultimate purpose of international peace and security, he said.

Discussions of the difficult issues of training for the large and growing spectrum of peacekeeping missions took place in formal settings and the informal Ideas Exchange of the IAPTC Conference, Nov. 16-20, 2011. The international gathering of peacekeeping practitioners developed and deepened relationships that support prevention, and peaceful resolution, of conflict.



Several speakers addressed the changing environment of peacekeeping missions. United Nations Security Council resolutions include increasingly diverse and complex tasks. The peacekeeping personality changed dramatically since 1991 when the top nations contributing peacekeeping personnel were France, Pakistan, Italy, the United States and the United Kingdom. The five now are Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, Nigeria and Egypt.

Izumi Nakamitsu, director of the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations’ Division of Policy, Evaluation and Training, characterized the current situation. Today’s peacekeeping operations are increasingly marked by friction within the peacekeeping partnership, greater expectations for protection of civilians, more robust approach to deterrence requiring use of force and operational readiness, expectations for peace-building tasks, she said.

As keynote speaker, Victoria A. Holt, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Bureau of International Organization Affairs, called this a pivotal time for peacekeeping.

“Where this organization works is the exactly the space between the ambitions of the international community for peacekeeping and what happens in the field,” she said, about the members of the IAPTC.



Anthony Banbury, the United Nation's Assistant Secretary General for Field Support, offered the UN perspective about increasingly complex peacekeeping mandates. Banbury was one of multiple interagency representatives who called for adaptability and flexibility in support of country-specific and mission-specific requirements.

Peace operations are a gamble, she said.

“We can only hope and pray that the peacekeepers who have been deployed – military, police, and civilian – have the best strength they can, have the best leaders they can, have the best training they can ... because what they do is what we care about.”

The tempo of peacekeeping missions has not diminished, she noted.

“East Timor is winding down, Sierra Leone has almost completed but many missions started in the last decade are still with us today,” said Holt. “And we’ve seen an increase in expectations for these missions. Not only have peacekeepers been asked to go ... to help the law take hold, to help the political peace strengthen, and help the government govern, but we’ve also asked peacekeepers to go into places where you need that Chapter 7 authorization where everyone has not laid down their guns, where those who wish to continue the fight have done so. The role of the peacekeepers at the very low level is to make sure that things stay together We’ve added to what UN missions are asked to do.

Holt appealed to the IAPTC community to identify lessons learned and build a community of knowledge to move peacekeeping training in three ‘hard’ issues critical to a chance of stable peace –

- “Put content behind” protection of civilians -- which is different from military skills and can be the linchpin to the credibility of the peace mission.
- include training for peacekeepers who will face sexual- and gender-based violence as a component of war.

- Prevent mission compromise by peacekeepers who are themselves abusive.

“I am banking on all of you to tell us how it’s going, what we’ve done so well that we need to know better and how we can only get better in the future,” she said to the assembly of trainers and leaders.

“If there’s a larger theme for the U.S. government, it is partnership,” said Holt. “We see our role in the world as rolling up our sleeves and being part of multilateral organizations, working alongside regional organizations, working within the UN, not because the UN is a perfect institution or that we have an idealized vision of it, but exactly because it’s what we have and we want to make it more effective, more able to deliver on both our moral and strategic ambitions.

The trainers and leaders in attendance used the conference to explore options for sharing lessons and learning from others.

“How do we measure the impact of training? It’s why I’m here – to create dialogue within this community of practice,” said Analyze Crete, from Italy, who works within 13 training institutes under the Europe Commission and welcomed the opportunity for cross-talk about training standards.

“If you take a general human rights course with its 4 essential components, including the legal framework, then, we need to adapt for individual mission mandates, like the UN mandate on protection of civilians -- which evolves with the evolving political situation.

“This is not competitive,” said Dories Sanftenberg, from Germany, who added to Creta’s remarks about measuring training success by the peacekeepers’ mission success. “Peacekeeping is always evolving but we need all peacekeeping participants to arrive with the same training package, starting at the same point, operational from day one.”

The weeklong conference engaged almost 200 military, police and civilian participants from more than 60 nations in formal presentations and informal exchanges. The aim of the IAPTC is to facilitate communication and exchange of information between peace training centers and those interested. To understand the increasingly complex peacekeeping environment and exchange practices.

The Army War College hosted the conference at Carlisle Barracks.

When Commandant Maj. Gen. Gregg Martin welcomed the conference participants, he noted the Army War College’s shared commitment to apply education in the pursuit of stability and a better peace. “The true value of this conference is to gather professionals united by a common purpose. Your business is to explore ideas and address challenges for education and training for those who will be responsible for ‘winning the peace’ as an alternative to conflict or in its aftermath.

“Our Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute is at the forefront of this effort today,” said Martin. “PKSOI represents the Army’s commitment to responsible peacekeeping and stability operations, and to the power of professional relationships.”

The PKSOI works with interagency partners, as evidenced by the conference speaker list, to include Victoria Holt; Jean-Marie Guehenno, director of the Center of Conflict Resolution; Anthony Banbury, Assistant Secretary General for Field Support at the UN; Izumi Nakamitsu, director of the Division of Policy, Evaluation and Training in the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations; and, Dr. James Schear, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Partnership Strategy and Stability Operations.

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