

International fellows become novice diplomats

Lt. Col. Frank Misurelli, Army War College Public Affairs Office

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Conducting negotiations, on the left side of the table from the Armenian Country Team are (L to R) Lt. Col. Ralph Arundell, United Kingdom, and Brig. Gen. Ajit Mudholkar, India; and on the right side of the table from the Russian Country Team are (L to R) Col. Patcharawat Thnaprarnsing, Thailand, Col. Fatih Altun, Turkey, and Col. Gabriel Pinilla, Colombia. Army War College

International Fellows recently took part in a two-day Negotiation Exercise in Collins Hall. Photo by Lizzie Poster.

Feb. 10, 2009 -- International Fellows at the Army War College honed important skills in a recently completed Strategic Crisis Negotiation Exercise in Collins Hall on Feb. 5 and 6.

The exercise brought together more than 40 foreign military officers who are studying with U.S. colleagues during the 10-month resident course at the Army War College. It prepares the Fellows for official communication on behalf of their nations during future assignments.

The two-day exercise centered on international negotiation efforts to resolve an ongoing conflict in 2018. This scenario-driven exercise involved nations within the South Caucasus region, a relatively small area located between the Black and Caspian Seas, and bounded by the larger nations of Russia, Iran and Turkey.

Each Fellow worked on one of seven negotiation teams representing the nations of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Iran, Russia, Turkey, the United States, and the non-nation state of Nagorno-Karabakh. Over the course of the exercise, student teams entered into bilateral and multilateral negotiations in an effort to develop a negotiated solution to the conflict. The exercise culminated in a ministerial meeting,

a joint meeting with all of the teams chaired by a retired ambassador portraying the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative to the region.

Joining the students was a mentorship team who helped them to comprehend the complexities of the region, the conflict, and the issues, and coached them in the art and nuances of negotiations.

Led by Ambassador Cynthia Efird, USAWC Deputy Commandant for International Affairs, the mentor team consisted of eight retired ambassadors and two War College senior faculty members. Three of the mentors previously served as Ambassadors to Armenia, two have served as U.S. chief negotiators for Nagorno-Karabakh and all have extensive experience in the Caucasus region and in strategic-level international negotiations.

"This was great, excellent exposure to high level negotiations and all the students got into the role," said Australian Col. Simon Roach, a member of the Nagorno-Karabakh team, who showed a flair for the dramatic when he pounded his shoe on the table for emphasis during the ministerial meeting chaired by retired Ambassador William Hill. "You appreciate the challenges of negotiations," he said.

Russian Team members in the midst of a team meeting include (left to right) Col. Ndagulu Imam, Nigeria, Lt. Col. Petre Codin, Romania, Col. Fatih Altun, Turkey, and Brig. Gen. Anwar Ayasrah, Jordan. Photo by Lizzie Poster.



"This is the fourth time I have participated in this exercise so I really enjoy it," said Hill. "This exercise is good use of real situations and a good practice," he said at the conclusion of the exercise.

"The international fellows, all masters of the military element of power now have a better grasp of the diplomatic element of power and how the two can be combined," said Hill.



Maj. Gen. Josef Proks, First Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Army of the Czech Republic, is briefed by retired Ambassador



Harry Gilmore, the first U.S. Ambassador to Armenia and Ritchie Dion, contractor with Booze Allen Hamilton, about what training the International Fellows are receiving. Proks is a 1999 USAWC graduate. Photos by Lizzie Poster.

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