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Conference Brief

Strategic Studies Institute

U.S. Army War College,

Women in International Security, and

Georgetown University

STABILIZATION AND POST-CONFLICT OPERATIONS: THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY

Compiled by
Dr. Dallas Owens
Strategic Studies Institute

Key Insights:

- The military invariably conducts conflict and post-conflict operations with other agencies. These agencies must be prepared and resourced for their participation, including transition from or to serving as lead-agency for the operation.
- The Department of Defense (DoD) needs to define war or conflict more broadly, and incorporate other agencies, especially Department of State (DoS), into its planning and execution phases much earlier and more completely than is now the practice.
- The military's changing role requires it to better understand world cultures where it operates and the organizational cultures of agencies with whom it works.
- The DoS has begun the organizational change necessary to become an equal operational partner with the military, but remains inadequately funded.
- The United States clearly recognizes the need for international peacekeeping partners; its difficulty is to determine the appropriate role for those collaborators, to determine needs for assistance to become better partners, and to effectively manage that assistance.

The Women In International Security (WIIS) and Georgetown University, in cooperation with the Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, sponsored a conference, "Stabilization and Post-Conflict Operations: The Role of the Military," on November 17, 2004. Over 80 people participated in the conference conducted at Georgetown University. For areas of geographical emphasis, the conference sponsors selected the Middle East and Africa. The Middle East was an obvious choice, based on current interest in ongoing stability operations. Africa is recognized widely as a location with potential for similar activity, and the United States and Europe have invested effort in preparing African militaries to respond.

The conference program was designed to discuss stabilization and post-conflict operations in terms of: (1) the definition and strategic nature of such operations, (2) the military's doctrine and preparedness for conducting operations of this type, (3) international cooperation and learning among militaries to prepare them for such operations, and (4) the way ahead for the U.S. military and government to organize and prepare for stabilization and post-conflict operations. A panel, with members drawn from diverse backgrounds, was dedicated to each of these four topics.

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