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Naval Postgraduate School - Building Integrity in Peace Support Operations (BIPSO) Pilot Workshop Held

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Building Integrity in Peace Support Operations (BIPSO) Pilot Workshop Held

Article by Maggie Spivey

The Building Integrity in Peace Support Operations (BIPSO) pilot workshop was held September 19 – 23 at the Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) Peace Support Operations Training Centre (PSOTC) in Sarajevo.

The PSOTC is a designated NATO Partnership for Peace Training and Education Center (PTC) and has been working with the Naval Postgraduate School—the United States' PTC (USPTC)—over the past 2 years on a variety of Building Integrity programs.

The workshop was coordinated by a team from the USPTC and attended by a group of military and security personnel who may serve in future Peace Support Operations (PSOs) or as potential instructors for the workshop.

One of the USPTC instructors, Mr. Max Kidalov, Assistant Professor of Procurement Law and Policy in the Graduate School of Business and Public Policy, noted that some of the students had previously deployed in support of PSOs. "Those who had been deployed were allowed to present experience on their perspectives, which gave those who had not been deployed a conceptual framework to think of in terms of why integrity is important, strategically and tactically."

"And most importantly, for all students, it gave them scenarios, questions, and examples of how they would exercise or make their own decisions," he added. "The workshop was designed to give them concepts but also actionable thinking and decision-making skills."

Supporting this goal included the objectives for participants to understand the negative impact and affect that corruption can have on PSOs and post-conflict reconstruction efforts and also to train officers to counter ways in which corruption undermines mission success, unit cohesion, discipline, and counter-insurgency efforts along with the safety, security, and trust of troops, the local population, and other stakeholders.

According to Dr. Robert McNab, Associate Professor of Economics with the Defense Resources Management Institute and Global Public Policy Academic Group, and also part of the USTPC team, "One of the major points of the whole class was to look at the system costs of disposal rather than the incremental cost of the assets involved."

"Basically, the benefit of the class is that security and disposal of excess assets does not just stop with physical security," he continued. "Excess weaponry and ammunition is easily lost to corruption, and to secure such material requires the commitment to inventory control and disposal through a transparent, efficient mechanism. The disposal of excess assets, to include trucks, buildings, and land, must be carefully planned in advance and open to public and private input."

The workshop attendees had the opportunity to put these concepts into practice during the capstone exercise on the final two days of the program. Developed by Mr. Nicholas Tomb, Program Coordinator with the Center for Stabilization at Reconstruction Studies at the UPSTC, the scenario was based on past PSOs and their accompanying challenges.

Rounding out the group of USPTC instructors was Mr. Mark Dankel, consultant to the USPTC and National Security Institute. He covered many of the NATO Building Integrity principles and elements during his sessions.

Lastly, including military and police personnel together in the workshop provided another outcome. As Kidalov stated, "It allowed officers from different backgrounds to be exposed to the thinking of the other service. In a deployment, they will be together, but without an experience like the class, they might not understand how the other thinks, so that was extremely valuable."

"Also, they had to recognize the differences between the military and police cultures, but this eventually ends up mutually benefitting both sides as they are operating as a total force," Kidalov added. "Integrity and corruption challenges are a total force challenge and have to be addressed by all parts of the force."

To view more photos from this event, view the event album on the USPTC Facebook Page.

Photo credit: Nermin Dedic

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