

Strategic Studies Summit

Building Partnerships

Antalya, Turkey

March 23 to 25, 2015

Final Report





The Strategic Studies Network (SSN) is a partnership of over seventy institutions dedicated to the interdisciplinary study of politics, natural resources, economics, diplomacy, and military power. In order to help develop regional solutions to regional problems, the goal of the SSN is to encourage think tanks in developing policy-relevant research with frank and informed dialogue on security challenges facing the region.

The 2015 Strategic Studies Summit was held in Antalya, Turkey from March 23 to 25 2015. The Summit was hosted by the Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies (NESA) in partnership with the Center for Middle Eastern Strategic Studies (ORSAM). The Summit brought together 116 key strategists from 30 countries and 72 strategic studies centers.

Entitled, "Building Partnerships," the overarching theme of the Summit focused on the need to build strategic alliances to tackle common problems that are often beyond the capacity of a single nation or organization.

Through a combination of plenary and working group sessions, the Summit provided multiple avenues for the exchange of ideas within the policy and academic communities. Over the course of two days, the conference explored the changing nature of the global political and economic system and the need for collective action articulated in a broad regional and global strategy to tackle shared security challenges.

Our ongoing efforts at greater inclusion of all voices from across the region are aimed at developing concrete recommendations to address critical issues from diverse regional perspectives. This requires a great deal of hard work and commitment from all institutions involved and it has been inspiring to witness the increasing accomplishments of the SSN over the past several years. We would like to thank all participants for all their hard work at this year's Summit.

Within this context of evolving the SSN and building partnerships, we would like to offer special thanks to our co-sponsor, the Center for Middle Eastern Strategic Studies (ORSAM) and its President, Dr. Saban Kardas. We would also like to extend our deepest gratitude to the Turkish Prime Ministry's External Relations Department for its very generous support of this year's Summit.

March 23—24: Welcome Reception, Opening Plenary, and Working Groups



The Summit was kicked off by a welcome reception hosted by the NESACenter on the evening of March 23, with welcome remarks from the respective NESACenter and ORSAM Directors, Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Terry A. Wolff and Dr. Saban Kardas. Their comments set the stage for the Summit, with both stressing the increasing need to strengthen old partnerships and build new ones to tackle shared security challenges.

On March 24, the Arab League Representative to Turkey, H.E. Amb. Mohamed El Fatah Naciri, opened the first plenary session with remarks about the changing Middle East regional landscape, followed by a lively question-and-answer session.



Following the opening plenary, five working groups began their deliberations over the course of the next two days on the following topics: (1) Climate Change: Implications for Security and Governance; (2) Global Powers in the NESACenter Region: Cooperation or Rivalry?; (3) Lessons on Combatting Radicalism; (4) Shale Revolution: Economic and Strategic Implications; and (5) Mediterranean Security.

On the evening of March 24, ORSAM hosted a cultural excursion and dinner in the historic town of Side, near Antalya.

Climate Change: Implications for Security and Governance

Co-chaired by Dr. Uttam Sinha of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) and Dr. Robert Boggs of the NESAC Center, the working group consisted of participants from Bangladesh, India, Iraq, Israel, Morocco, Nepal, Pakistan, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, and the United States.



There was complete unanimity within the group about the importance of climate change as a national and international security challenge. It was agreed that climate change is, in fact, the quintessential strategic threat insofar as it is long-term and global in scope, weakens the economic foundations of many countries, and stresses the international order.

Climate change acts on two interrelated levels. It attacks human security, which can then have negative impacts on national and international stability.

One of the consequences of climate change, the increased severity of storms, is likely to create more natural disasters and to call more often on militaries for humanitarian responses. This, in turn, will stretch military capabilities and resources and highlight the need for building greater capacity.

Management of climate change should be incorporated into government planning at all levels:

- At the national level, there is often a need for better coordination among concerned ministries, such as energy, food and water.
- The responsibilities of each level of government must be clearly defined to minimize bureaucratic clashes.
- On the other hand, structures for climate change management that are too centralized can limit the initiative and flexibility of local governments.

As climate change pressures increase, governments tend to look inward, which is not the most adaptive response. On the contrary, since climate change is global, effective responses must include transnational collaboration, including the following lessons and recommendations:

- Israel, for example, has valuable technology in drip irrigation and dry-land farming;
- Climate change can be a driver for creating new regional organizations to research and implement environmental action. Alternatively, existing research organizations can be networked across borders;
- Existing water accords can be resuscitated, such as the Iran-Iraq agreement of 1975;
- Researching and re-introducing indigenous methods of climate change adaptation;
- Europe has centers of excellence that award prizes for international achievements in environmental protection.

Shale Revolution: Economic and Strategic Implications

Chaired by Dr. Gawdat Bahgat of the NESACenter, participants from Bangladesh, India, Jordan, Pakistan, Qatar, Sri Lanka, and Turkey gave presentations on their respective countries' energy outlooks. Important themes and takeaways include:

- “Fracking” technology has significantly improved the U.S. energy outlook.
- Global energy markets are well integrated. The U.S. will continue to be impacted, negatively or positively, by developments in other consuming and producing countries.
- Russia, Gulf States, and other major oil and gas producers are net losers.
- Major consumers such as the U.S., China, and India are net winners.
- Despite its improved energy outlook, the U.S. is not likely to turn its back or become less involved in the Middle East. The U.S. has other key national interests in the region (in addition to oil).
- While the group discussed the “Shale Revolution,” it was also agreed that energy is an integral part of a broader discussion of security issues—including food, water, and climate change.



Global Powers in the NESACenter Region: Cooperation or Rivalry?

The group consisted of participants from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Belgium, China, Germany, India, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Morocco Pakistan, Qatar, Russia, Turkey, Ukraine, and Yemen.

The working group was split into two sub-groups. Maj. Gen. Mohammad Farghal of the Center for Strategic Studies (Jordan) chaired the sub-group focused on the Middle East. Dr. Roger Kangas of the NESACenter chaired the sub-group focused on Central and South Asian issues. The groups sought to identify the main objectives of global powers; examine areas of cooperation and competition between these global powers; and provide recommendations to regional governments on how to navigate the evolving international scene. It was largely agreed that critical to this discussion is creating a “win-win” situation for countries of the sub-regions while downplaying the competition spiraling out of control and negatively involving other players in each region.

The first draft of the working group’s paper will be completed by the end of June 2015, with a final end product to be completed by the end of January 2016.



Lessons on Combatting Radicalism

Chaired by Amb. Senen Florensa of The European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed; Spain) and Dr. Haldun Yalcinkaya of ORSAM (Turkey), the group consisted of participants from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Morocco, Pakistan, Qatar, Spain, Sri Lanka, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

Key Takeaways:

The threat landscape of radicalism has undergone a major shift since the emergence of ISIS/Daesh. One could categorize the current environment as the “post-ISIS environment.”

As we look at the state of play across South Asia, Central Asia, and the Near East, radicalism has constantly reared its ugly head. While the threat may have dissipated in some other areas, it remains a clear and present danger in these regions.

The recent attacks in Peshawar in Pakistan and in Afghanistan and various other countries in the region highlight the nature of the threat that is faced by countries in the region.

There is a real need to look at the threat of radicalism in the cyber domain. Groups across these regions are now using cyberspace more adroitly than ever to spread their negative ideology and strategic communication. While Internet penetration may be low on broadband terms, the prevalence of mobile phones makes Internet widely available everywhere.

The radical groups, including groups such as ISIS, have mastered the use of Internet and will continue to spread their message through Internet and social media. It is therefore critical to initiate counter-measures to thwart their efforts.

Financing is a key element in the spread of radicalism. Unless we can stem the flow of money, radical groups will continue to flourish.

That said, there is a need to acknowledge that the failure of governments and deficits in good governance and development are important factors in attracting people towards radicalism. While ideological pull is there, one cannot ignore the fact that disenchantment and deprivation work as important factors attracting people towards radical causes.

There is a critical need for states to work together with communities and formulate a community-based approach. Countering radicalism cannot be the role of states alone and it is important to engage the society. Social resilience can be an effective tool in countering radical thought.

We must acknowledge that ultimately we are waging a battle of ideas. Groups such as ISIS are not only challenging our national security but they are a threat to our civilizational identity. It was agreed, therefore, that we need to formulate effective counter-narratives to win this battle of ideas, as it is ultimately an ideational struggle.

Mediterranean Security

Chaired by Ms. Anne Moisan of the NESACenter, the working group consisted of participants from Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia, and Turkey.

The working group was one meeting in a series of programs focused on the theme of countering radical extremism. The roundtable discussion began with an analysis of the threats and how countries of the region view the threat of radicalism (Daesh and its affiliates; the radicalization of youth; and terrorists and extremists). The group then sought to identify the causes of the threat and the hypnotic appeal of Daesh and similar groups. It examined the success of current programs, including government-led programs, coalition programs, and regional initiatives, with an emphasis on what has worked and what hasn't.

There was consensus that the appeal to radicalism could be directly related to failures by governments to meet the expectations levied on them by their citizens, particularly in the wake of the so-called 'Arab Spring.' This void was perceived as being filled by radical groups such as Daesh. That said, the answers to countering radicalism lie with a comprehensive "whole of government" and "whole of society" approach that includes local community efforts, parents, educators, civil society, and religious leaders.

As is its custom, the group formulated a specific set of "brainstorming" recommendations with an emphasis on "whole of society" approaches, regional initiatives/cooperation/collaboration, and the role of sub-regional organizations (e.g., the Arab Maghreb Union, GCC, Arab League, NATO, EU, UN, etc.).



The thirty-four actionable policy recommendations formulated by the working group are attached as an addendum to this report.

Conclusion: March 25: Working Group Reports and Closing Plenary

The chairs of the 2014 working groups presented their respective groups' reports during a plenary panel session on the morning of March 25 (presentations and papers attached, or links included).

2014 Working Group Presentations:

The Arab Spring in a Comparative Perspective: The working group was chaired by Amb. Senen Florensa, President of the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed). It met for the first time at least year's Strategic Studies Summit in Bangkok, Thailand. An interim meeting of the working group was hosted by IEMed in Barcelona in December 2014. The final outcome was a comprehensive joint policy volume produced by researchers from the SSN and the EuroMeSCo networks of think tanks. The full report can be accessed here: <http://www.iemed.org/publicacions-en/historic-de-publicacions/joint-policy-studies/the-arab-spring-in-comparative-perspective>

Iran in Regional and Global Perspective: The working group was chaired by Dr. Vladimir Orlov, President of the Russian Center for Policy Studies (PIR Center). After meeting for the first time in Bangkok, an interim meeting of the working group was hosted by the PIR Center in Moscow in May 2014. The final report will be presented at upcoming conferences in New York (NPT Review Conference); Geneva (Conference on Disarmament); Vienna (IAEA); and Moscow. Dr. Orlov's presentation that he delivered in Antalya is attached.

Maritime Security in the Indian Ocean Region: The working group was co-chaired by Commadore Hisham Muhammad of NDU-Pakistan and Mr. Jeffrey Payne of the NESAC Center. The final policy analysis included the various perspectives of participants from India, Pakistan, China, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and the United States. The paper (attached) was presented by Commadore Hisham Muhammad at the Summit in Antalya.

Post-Conflict Reconciliation: The working group was chaired by Mr. Asanga Abeyagoonasekera, former Executive Director of the Lakshman Kadirgamar Institute for International Relations and Strategic Studies. His remarks on the deliberations of the working group were published in [*The Sunday Leader*](#). The paper on the Sri Lankan perspective of post-conflict reconciliation is attached.

Afghanistan in Transition: The working group was chaired by Amb. (Ret.) Farooq Sobhan, President of the Bangladesh Enterprise Institute, and Ms. Mariam Safi, co-founder of the Organization for Policy Research and Development Studies (DROPS). Ms. Safi presented the findings of the working group at the Summit in Antalya (attached). The final end product will be included in a peer-reviewed journal published by DROPS in October.

A closing plenary was held at the conclusion of the program on March 25, where this year's working group chairs delivered their respective group's plans for the upcoming year. A Directors' Meeting was convened after the conclusion of the event to set the larger agenda and work plan of the SSN for the remainder of the academic year.

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About NESAS

The NESAS Center team consists of 40+ security professionals located on the National Defense University campus in Washington, DC. The mission of the NESAS Center is to enhance security in the Near East and South Asia by building sustained, mutually beneficial relationships; fostering regional cooperation on security issues; and promoting effective communications and strategic capacity through free and candid interaction in an academic environment.



About ORSAM

ORSAM is an independent think-tank specializing on Middle Eastern affairs. ORSAM seeks to diversify sources of knowledge on the region and establish a channel of communication between the local experts and Turkish academic and policy circles. Toward that end, ORSAM facilitates the exchanges of officials, academics, strategists, journalists, businesspeople and members of civil society from the region with their Turkish counterparts. ORSAM conducts studies on the regional developments and disseminates their results to the policy and academic circles as well as the wider public through various publication outlets. ORSAM publications include books, reports, bulletins, newsletters, policy briefs, conference minutes and two journals Ortadoğu Analiz and Ortadoğu Etütleri.

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