



Strategic Field of National Security

A policy brief from a seminar on the 7th and 8th of December 2021

Introduction

On the 7th and 8th of December 2021, the Strategic Studies & Research Center (SSRC) from the Iraqi Defence University of Higher Military Studies and the Royal Danish Defence College's (RDDC) Center for Stabilisation (CFS) held a seminar titled "Strategic Field of National Security". The seminar was conducted in close cooperation with NATO Mission Iraq (NMI) and NATO's Defence Education Enhancement Programme (DEEP) for Iraq. The seminar was part of an academic cooperation, which held its first joint events in the shape of two webinars in April and June 2021. As a key objective, the cooperation seeks to promote international academic collaboration and knowledge sharing between the security institutions as well as identifying sustainable avenues for security sector reforms (SSR) and counter-terrorism in Iraq.

The objective of the recent seminar was to promote capacity building by enhancing international cooperation on military education within Iraqi security institutions based on academic research. The seminar had attendance from personnel from the Defence University for Higher Military Studies, Denmark, the Czech Republic as well as NMI. The program consisted of two

sessions, respectively titled "Terrorist organization strategy and its processing mechanisms" and "The nature and the targets of security policy in the shadow of existed and potential challenges for the local security environment". An internal workshop between the SSRC, the CFS, and NATO security institutions took place on the following day.

Director of SSRC, staff Brigadier General Ahmed Ali Hussain Tememi, held the opening speech, followed by two short talks courtesy of chief guests staff Lieutenant General Saad Al-Allaq, President of the Iraqi Defence University for Higher Military Studies, and NMI HQ Commander, Lieutenant General Michael Lollesgaard. Introductory remarks were held by Director at CFS, David Vestenskov. The first session focused on the strategies of terrorist organizations, in which the presentations were delivered by Dr. Haider Askar, Ph.D. at SSRC, and Dr. Dominika Kosárová, Ph.D. at the Czech Centre for Security and Military Strategic Studies. The second session focused on the local security environment, and how SSR initiatives can be used to improve the national security strategy, in which presentations were delivered by Mr. Christian Høj Hansen, Head of Section at CFS, and Dr. Qais Nafil, Ph.D. at



SSRC.

The second day workshop on future collaboration between the SSRC and CFS also included a presentation from Ms. Anne Sofie Schøtt, Ph.D. at the RDDC, on Transnationalised intra-state conflicts, and a presentation from Ms. Dominika Kosárová on the Standards of publishing in European journals.

The seminar presented several interesting perspectives on strategical approaches on countering extremism and SSR efforts that can be applied to enhance academic cooperation between the SSRC and defense colleges from NATO member countries. The next step for the SSRC-RDDC cooperation will be to invite an SSRC delegation to attend an academic visit to Denmark and subsequently to hold a second seminar in June 2022 in Baghdad. The next steps will be conducted as part of NMI's efforts to strengthen Iraqi security institutions and will be financially supported by the Danish Peace and Stabilisation Fund.

Terrorist Organizations and its mechanisms

Dr. Haider used his presentation to address the strategies of terrorist groups and various mechanisms to confront these by focusing on the cases of Al-Qaeda and ISIS. Dr. Haider addressed the financial strategies of these criminal organizations such as its combat style financing through contingents, its media presence as well as its centralized decision protocols and decentralized implementation. To tackle these problems, suggested various preventive security strategies, such as

improved intelligence cooperation between advanced countries and the NMI.

Dr. Dominika Kosárová followed with a presentation that focused on the Czech experience with terrorism and its counterterrorism strategy in which she focused on the strategy's five main areas including cooperation between the police and intelligence services, and banking institutions role in terms of countering the financing of terrorism etc. She also focused on the Czech Republic's implementation of international commitments to its national legislative framework, and how this approach suggests that the national legislation on terrorism has adapted to the current needs in society. On an endnote, she addressed the media's role in combating terrorism, in which the media should strive to not sensationalize news related to terror.

Recommendations from Session 1

- Improved intelligence cooperation and knowledge sharing within NMI can improve the fight against terrorism, especially if the knowledge is shared with Iraqi security institutions.
- National comprehensive legislation on terrorism should be adapted in a focused framework within five specific areas.
- The providers of internet services have to eliminate materials glorifying terrorist attacks as well as materials containing instructions how to create bombs or weapons to commit an attack.



Local Security Environment and SSR

Mr. Christian Høj Hansen focused on the main challenges that affect the prospect of improving and implementing SSR in Iraq based on the lessons learned from previous engagements in Afghanistan. Mr. Høj Hansen explained how SSR can help the Iraqi security sector's ability to handle the violence and threat from Daesh by using teaching centers to educate Iraqi Security Forces as well as promote academic cooperation and knowledge sharing between Iraqi and NATO affiliated security institutions on SSR and terrorist threats. This will prove sustainable as it can exist without external support and can also include regional actors to make SSR-initiatives more regional-oriented and thereby more sustainable.

Dr. Qais Al-Awwayeh focused on the local security environment in the light of the challenges. Dr. Qays emphasized the objectives of Iraq's security policy in terms of not overstepping the possibilities available and achieving a greater balance between the hierarchical peace of the Iraqi State. Any imbalance in these factors could lead to catastrophic effects. Finally, there is a need for genuine cooperation among Iraqi institutions to achieve the objectives of security policy, and Iraq will also have to overcome certain political crises in order to do so.

Recommendations from Session 2

- SSR initiatives should be regional-oriented and thereby more sustainable.
- Create a greater balance between the hierarchical ladder of the Iraqi state without exceeding the available resources of the state.
- Improving cooperation between Iraqi institutions through joint security seminars in order to overcome challenges that affect the security policy objectives.

Internal Workshop Between SSRC and NATO Security Institutions

The workshop included an evaluation of the seminar and discussions on future approaches to cooperation. As part the workshop, Dr. Anne Sofie Schøtt also held a presentation on transnationalised intra- state conflicts and the Kurdish battle against ISIS from the perspective of the mobilization of the Kurdish diaspora in Denmark.

Dr. Dominika Kosárová did also deliver an insightful presentation on the standards of publishing in European journals in order to enhance SSRC's and other Iraqi security institutions capacity to pass on their academic work to a broader audience in terms of international journals.