



Seminar between the Iraqi Defense University for Higher Military Studies and the Royal Danish Defence College

Policy brief from the seminar on December 7th and 8th, 2022 in Baghdad, Iraq

Introduction

The Strategic Studies and Research Center (SSRC) at the Iraqi Defence University for Higher Military Studies (DUHMS) in cooperation with the Centre for Stabilization (CFS) at the Royal Danish Defence College's Institute for Strategy and War Studies (RDDC), held a joint seminar discussion from the 7th and 8th of December 2022 in Baghdad, Iraq. The purpose of the seminar discussion was to create a forum for In order to strengthen the relations of cooperation, exchange knowledge and build academic capacities between the researchers of SSRC and the researchers of the Danish Center for Stabilization, The workshop presented views on selected war-related topics in Ukraine and its global and regional ramifications. The seminar discussion was

part of a three-day visit by a delegation from the RDDC over two days on 7th of December, while on 8th of December a more flexible and informal round table discussion on professional military education (PME) was held to enhance the level of capacity-building efforts in Iraq's security sector.

The workshop was attended by top figures headed by the President of DUHMS, Lieutenant General Saad Mazhar Mohsen Al-Alaq, the Commander of the Royal Danish Defence College, Rear Admiral Henrik Ryberg, the Director of the Center for Strategic Studies and Research, Major General Ahmed Ali Hussein Al-Tamimi, and the Director of the Professional Security Education Department division in NATO Mission Iraq (NMI), Brigade General Özgür Demir,



Representatives from departments and directorates of the Iraqi Ministry of Defense and the commanders of the formations of DUHMS also participated.

NATO Mission Iraq (NMI) and NATO Defence Education Enhancement Programme (DEEP) supported the program for the visit. The initiative is a part of RDDC's stabilization

program for Iraq, which is managed by the CFS and financially supported by the Danish Peace- and Stabilisation Fund's program for Iraq and Syria. The aim of the program is to enhance cooperation and academic capacity building on PME and Security Sector Reforms (SSR) between Danish and Iraqi security institutions as

well as gather knowledge about the security situation in Iraq for the Danish Defence to be used in education and research.

Key takeaways from the seminar

The seminar consisted of two sessions focusing on 'Great Power Balance and the Implications for Security Systems Globally and in the Middle East' and 'The implications of War on Shortages of Resources, Logistics and Supply-Chains'.

The scientific assistant of the SSRC, Dr. Haider Taha Aska initiated the first session with a presentation on the *'Dimensions of the Russian-Ukrainian war and its repercussions on Iraq and the Middle East'*. Dr. Taha turned the focus to the various opportunities and challenges that



Participants at the seminar in Basra Hall (Foto: RDDC).



the war has provoked in Iraq and the Middle East. He eluded to the rising economic, political, and security-military problems. The war has created an urgent need for new ways of importing food. Furthermore, the war has resulted in an increase in petrol, making it increasingly difficult for Iraqis to make the ends meet. Dr. Taha explained that the war has evidently proven that Iraq should continue to form new external partnerships outside the Middle East in order to secure and promote economic and political stability internally and in the region.

Following the first presentation, Chief of Section at the Institute for Strategy and War Studies at the RDDC, Dr. Annemarie Peen Rodt, illuminated her analysis on the current *'global and regional strategic implications of the war in Ukraine'*. Dr. Rodt eluded to the different levels of analysis that the war is characterized by. The most noticeable level has been the regional implications which revolve around the framing of how there is now a war in the eastern parts of Europe and how it's reflected in the international (dis)order of the global power system. Furthermore, she stated that we have to understand the mind

of the system as a unit with all its complexities and pay attention to how the factors of a specific situation interplay with the international system. Lastly, Dr. Rodt pointed out that even though we see the international system as more fluent, we should not count on history repeating itself despite it currently rhyming.

Session two was kicked off Major Kristian Lindhardt, military researcher at the Institute for Strategy and War Studies at the RDDC. Mj. Lindhardt highlighted the land military aspects of the war and argued that Russia's goal in Ukraine is to obtain a Ukrainian client state and establish Novorossiya in the south and eastern part of Ukraine. However, they have failed in doing so, resulting in a current arms race.

Then, Dr. Bassem Khamis Khair Allah with the SSRC delivered a presentation on how *'Ukraine symbolizes the impact of multiple crises leading to collisions'*. The war has created national, regional, and international problems thus requiring a need to rethink the regional approach to these international crises and its repercussions.



The second day of the seminar featured a workshop in a roundtable format in which the participants could informally discuss Iraqi and Danish civil-military relations as well as their different approaches to Professional Military Education. The workshop also included presentations from Dr. Annemarie, Major Kristian Lindhardt, and researcher, Suhail Ali Abd Nassif.

The future cooperation between SSRC and CFS

The SSRC, as part of DUHMS, and CFS, as part of the RDDC, agreed on the need for constantly working towards solidifying and enhancing cooperation by organizing seminars, webinars, and workshops for knowledge-sharing. Thus, in May of 2023 a delegation of SSRC researchers will participate in an academic course organised by and hosted at the RDDC. The next joint seminar between the parties will commence in Baghdad come December 2023.

Key recommendations:

1. Iraq should obtain a strategy that seeks to form partnerships with countries in NATO to recreate Iraq's status and promote economic and political stability.
2. A greater emphasis on how the war in Ukraine affects different levels of analysis and its interplay.
3. The war in Ukraine might lead to protectionist policies and damage globalization due to vulnerable economies.
4. Enhance the level of cooperation on PME and civil-military relations