

Global Consortium on Security Transformation (GCST)
**Inception Meeting of the Working Group on Regional Security from Above
and Below**

15 August 2009

Members of the Working Group on Regional Security from Above and Below (WGRS), a subcomponent of the Global Consortium on Security Transformation (GCST), met on August 15, 2009 at the Discovery Suites, Pasig City, Metro Manila, the Philippines and discussed how the WGRS project will be carried out by the regional teams. The goal was to set the timetable and deliverables, as well as to have an agreement on the template that will be used for the regional study paper in order to facilitate comparison. Present in the event were Dr. Carolina G. Hernandez and Professor Herman Kraft of the Institute for Strategic and Development Studies (ISDS Philippines), Mr. Gonzalo Serra of Red de Seguridad y Defensa de América Latina (RESDAL), and Dr. Mely Caballero-Anthony of S. Rajaratman School of International Studies (RSIS Singapore).

Dr. Hernandez started the meeting by giving a background on the GCST project. The GCST is a product of the early networking that took place around the Global Facilitation Network on Security Sector Reform (GFN-SSR). The original prime movers of the GCST were also members of the advisory group of the GFN-SSR. GCST was established to provide an avenue for collaboration in looking at various security concerns especially among those in the Southern part of the globe. Different working groups were created as components of the project to map out developments in terms of specific as well as broad security issues in various regions of the world, and to identify possible areas of study. For the first year of work, the WGRS will be mapping the various players from above and below on regional security issues by examining discourses and activities that contribute to the shaping of security policies and concerns.

A presentation of the 'state of play' in Latin American and Southeast Asian countries and their relationships with the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Association of Southeast Asian (ASEAN), respectively, on issues regarding security followed. The discussion was intended to identify areas of concern that need to be addressed in designing the template for the case studies which will facilitate the comparison of the regions and regional organizations. In the presentation of OAS and Latin America, there was a suggestion to look for a sub-region which could also be examined with the OAS. However, South Asia and West Africa, as well as the relationship of these two regions to the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), respectively, were not represented in the

meeting because Dr. Rifaat Hussain, Dr.Funmi Olonisakin and Dr.Niyagale Bagayoko were not able to come and discuss their respective regions and related topics.

In the discussion of the methodology and the analytical framework, the members have agreed that the regional papers will be a mapping exercise on how the different actors from above and below in different levels – local, national, regional, international- define and perceive security in general, and regional security in particular. The regional paper is also intended to clarify the scope and definition of regional security as well as its constituent elements. In addition, the paper should also map and illustrate civil society involvement in security issues in order to explain how institutionalized civil society interacts with formal regional institutions. Instead of analyzing the impact of alternative regional security processes on improving the security of local communities, as stated in the memorandum of understanding, the regional teams would only be looking if such processes are present and whether they are felt by the local communities.

Each regional team is expected to submit a ‘state-of-the-art’ paper from the mapping exercise conducted in the region, two policy papers, regional bibliographies, and news items, papers, journal articles, conferences or events on security for the WGRS website. The members also agreed to attach maps that identify the scope of the region included in each paper and to place facts and figures about the region, the countries included in the region and the regional organization as Annexes. The dates of submission are indicated in the Memorandum of Understanding for Global Consortium on Security Transformation Working Group on Regional Security from Above and Below.