



**UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE
ACADEMY FOR INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND PEACEBUILDING**

**FOUNDATIONS OF CONFLICT ANALYSIS
OCTOBER 12-15, 2010**

Course Facilitator:
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AGENDA

For practitioners in the field of conflict prevention and conflict management, effective action depends upon insightful analysis. This course examines perspectives on the causes of international conflict and evolving threats to peace in the 21st century. The course introduces participants to analytical tools including strategic listening, conflict assessment frameworks scenario decision analysis, game theory, systems mapping, and situation analysis. Utilizing case studies and scenario exercises on conflicts in Rwanda, Afghanistan, Iraq, and other countries, participants learn to use these analytical tools to identify emerging threats of conflict and opportunities for productive engagement by third parties to prevent or mitigate violence.

Learning Objectives: By the end of this course, participants will be able to

- Explain the “life cycle” of violent conflict from pre-crisis tensions to post-conflict peacebuilding, and the characteristics of each of these stages of the conflict cycle;
- Identify various causes of conflict (including political, military, economic, historical, cultural, and environmental factors) that can threaten global security;
- Recognize conflict early warning signs (e.g. inflammatory rhetoric, formation of paramilitary groups);
- Utilize USIP’s strategic listening framework to identify the “6 W’s” of a conflict;
- Describe the principles of conflict assessment frameworks including the Do No Harm Framework, the Tactical Conflict Assessment and Planning Framework (TCAPF) and the Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework (ICAF);
- Utilize scenario analysis to anticipate and plan for potential trajectories of a conflict situation;
- Conduct a situation analysis in order to establish a “common operating picture” of the conflict environment both within one’s own organization and with partner institutions.

Note: Guest speakers may vary in future iterations.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 12

9.00 – 10.30

Introduction

- *Personal and professional experiences in the field*
- *Course plan & objectives*

10.30 – 10.45

Break

10.45 – 12.00

Opening Case Study: Afghanistan 2010

12.00 – 13.00

Lunch

13.00 – 14.30

Causes of Global Conflict

- *Review of USIP online conflict analysis course*
- *Dynamics and causes of 21st Century conflict*
- *Why conflicts turn deadly: strategic, psychological, socioeconomic, and cultural perspectives*
- *Rwanda case study*

14.30 – 15.30

Lessons learned exercise on conflict analysis toward Rwanda, 1990-1994

- *Participants work in small groups, analyzing reporting and decision-making by the following entities:*
 - *U.S. Embassy Kigali*
 - *Washington-based U.S. government officials*
 - *International Commission of Inquiry*
 - *NGOs*
 - *UNAMIR leadership*
 - *Media reports*

15.30-16.00

Wrap up for the day

- *Facilitator comments; discuss plan for next day*
- *Participant comments/questions*

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 13

9.00 – 9.30

Review of previous day

9.30 – 11.00

Rwanda Exercise Debrief: Cognitive Challenges of Conflict Analysis

- *Early warning and the Rwandan genocide: who got it right, who got it wrong, and why?*
- *How did conflict analysis inform policymaking and vice versa?*
- *Cognitive Challenges: Groupthink, Black Swans, and Psychic Numbing*
- *Key take-away lessons.*

- 11.00 – 11.15** **Break**
- 11.15 – 12.30** **A Survey of Conflict Analysis Models**
- *Discussion of conflict early warning watchlists, conflict metrics instruments, and conflict assessment frameworks*
- 12.30 – 13.30** **Lunch**
- 13.30 – 15.00** **Strategic Listening**
- *The 6 W's: Who, What, Why, When, Where, How?*
 - *The role of story-telling in escalating and resolving conflict.*
- 14.30 – 14.45** **Break**
- 15.00 – 15.30** **Wrap up for the day**
- *Facilitator comments; discuss plan for next day*
 - *Participant comments/questions*
 - *Homework: strategic listening exercise on Iraqi government formation negotiations*

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14

- 9.00 – 10.15** **Review of Previous Day; Iraq Exercise Debrief**
- 10.15 – 10.30** **Break**
- 10.30 – 12.00** **Game Theory Exercise: “Forming a New Iraqi Government” (with Charles Martin-Shields)**
- *Presentation on game theory*
 - *Exercise and debrief*
- 12.00 – 13.00** **Lunch**
- 13.00 – 14.15** **Group Discussion: Analyzing the Conflict over Iraqi Government Formation**
- *Conversation with Prof. Alexander Woodcock, George Mason University*
- 14.15– 14.30** **Break**
- 14.30 – 15.30** **Scenario Decision Planning**
- 15.30 – 16.00** **Wrap up for the day**
- *Facilitator comments; discuss plan for next day*
 - *Participant comments/questions*
 - *Evaluations*

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 15

- 9.00 – 10.30** **Review of Previous Day; Iraqi Government Formation Scenario Planning Exercise**
- 10.30 – 10.45** **Break**
- 10.45 – 12.30** **Risk Assessment & Strategy Development (with Prof. James Embrey, U.S. Army War College)**
- *SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)*
 - *Elements of Strategy: Ends, Ways, and Means*
 - *Strategy development exercise*
- 12.30 – 13.30** **Lunch**
- 13.30 – 15.00** **Debrief of Strategy Development Exercise on Iraqi Government Formation**
- 15.00 – 16.00** **Wrap up the seminar**
- *Discussion of practical applications of the course material for participants' own work*
 - *Concluding remarks*
 - *Course evaluations*
 - *Presentation of certificates*