



UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE

**GOVERNANCE AND DEMOCRATIC PRACTICES IN WAR-TO-PEACE TRANSITIONS**

May 16-20, 2011  
Washington, DC

Facilitated by  
Debra Liang-Fenton<sup>1</sup>

Establishing best practices in governance in countries damaged by war and internal conflict and building environments in which stable democracies can take root is difficult, but essential. The need to support and strengthen effective and legitimate executive institutions; develop legitimate systems of political representation; and create a robust civil society to include traditionally marginalized groups is necessary in order to establish the foundation of an open and stable society. How can this be achieved in states that have collapsed? This course will distill lessons learned, and importantly analyze current troubled areas around the world in order to provide the set of tools required to help rebuild nation states. The Governance and Democratic Practices Course will help enable practitioners, policy makers, and scholars to develop effective strategies in building democracy and governance in war-to-peace transitions.

A successful strategy in developing effective governance must involve a multidimensional and crosscutting approach in its application. While elections, for example, are an essential component in a democratic transition, without an interim government seen as legitimate in the eyes of the populace and the international community, and without some form of common legitimizing of the electoral process within civil society, the promise of an election can easily be reduced to an exercise in futility. No less important will be the challenges to democracy building such as developing a written constitution, strengthening the justice system, and creating an environment that can prepare for and hold free and fair elections, support an active and engaged civil society, and fight against corruption.

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<sup>1</sup> Debra Liang-Fenton is Course Developer of the Governance and Democratic Practices in War-to-Peace Transitions course for USIP. She is formerly Executive Director of the U.S. Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, and directed the Human Rights Implementation Project for USIP. She has worked on democracy projects for the NED, and has served as an editor of the *Journal of Democracy*. She is the editor of *Implementing U.S. Human Rights Policy: Agendas, Policies, and Practices* (USIP Press 2004).

In rebuilding states, the international community plays different roles in helping to negotiate, establish, and implement peace agreements. Forms of intervention can range from mediation to occupation. One of the more prominent types of intervention in war-to-peace transitions occurs with the UN assuming a leading role through a formal UN mission. Other types of intervention involve international or regional coalitions. This course will pay special attention to the role of the UN and the United States in peace implementation and state building.

## **Learning Objectives**

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

- Understand the elements/factors/components (“framework”) that are necessary to establish good governance in transition environments
- Use the framework to analyze a specific conflict in order to understand the strengths and weaknesses in a society
- Identify multidimensional issues within governance, and how these issues relate to each other
- Assess pre-existing factors on-the-ground that will inform how best to move forward in re-establishing and building institutions
- Develop an “action plan” or strategy for promoting governance in a particular transition environment
- Apply lessons learned in considering current war-to-peace transitions in evaluating governance
- Develop and apply strategies for creating successful transitions from post-conflict environments to more stable political systems

## **Teaching Methodology and Structure**

This course takes a problem-based approach to the role and function of governance in war-to-peace transitions, and will be punctuated by illustrative and timely case studies that are designed to underscore the challenges and lessons of establishing a viable and vibrant political system. Instructors, some of whom may not only have had direct experience in the field with post-conflict or transition scenarios but also are professors at distinguished Washington-based and international universities, will conduct intensive and interactive lectures and round-table seminars.

Case studies, interactive exercises, and simulations will be used to provide in-depth application of thematic issues, and will allow each student to solve problems from the vantage point of relevant institutions (from UN agencies to humanitarian groups to those in interim governments). These case studies will allow for serious discussion and analysis of cross-sector issues and perspectives from economic reconstruction to rule of law reform.

In addition to defining “success” and measured achievements, the primary challenge will be to first understand the core conditions for success of the identified state-building efforts, and to identify factors that are specific to those particular cases. It is the expectation that participants in this course will be able to take away lessons learned from these exercises and apply them to their work.

### **Course Requirements**

Participants enrolled in this course will find that it is ambitious and timely. Participants are expected to attend every seminar, and engage in discussions. Participants will be asked to summarize and comment on particular readings. In addition, participants will be asked to:

- Actively participate in all group discussions, exercises, and case studies
- Actively participate in the final simulation at the end of the course
- Draft and present country and policy analyses based on given exercise
- Develop guidelines for best practices



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## GOVERNANCE AND DEMOCRATIC PRACTICES IN WAR-TO-PEACE TRANSITIONS

### AGENDA

*Note:* Guest speakers may vary in future iterations.

#### **DAY 1**

Monday, May 16

9:00 am – 9:45 am

#### **Introduction**

- Brief introduction to USIP and instructor
- Course objectives and outline
- Introduction of participants

9:45 am – 10:30 am

#### **Discussion Period**

- What is governance? What is democracy?
- What is the role of the international community in supporting these ideas in a transition environment?
- Discussion of features of governance in war-to-peace transitions, and strategies for its promotion

10:30 am – 10:45 am

#### **Break**

10:45 am – 12:00 pm

#### **TRANSITIONS AND INTERIM GOVERNMENTS**

- Interim governments pose particular challenges from a governance perspective
- How is legitimate authority established in post-conflict countries, or countries undergoing a political transition, especially in cases where the state has been delegitimized because of actions that it may have taken against its own people?
- What is the role of the international community in establishing the institutions necessary for good governance—for example, an impartial judiciary, accountability in the security sector, and an education

system for all sectors of society—and how can it best work with domestic actors?

12:00 pm – 1:15 pm

**Lunch**

1:15 pm – 2:15 pm

**Case Study Exercise I: Democratic Governance in Afghanistan**

- Introduce case study

2:15 pm – 3:15 pm

**Case Study Exercise I: Analysis and Debate**

- Discuss and analyze political party development in Afghanistan.

3:15 pm – 3:45 pm

**Case Study Exercise I: Debrief and Recommendations**

- Participants will present their findings, identifying key challenges
- Recommendations will be discussed and included in “guidelines to governance and democratic practices”

3:45 pm – 4:00 pm

**Recap main themes of the day**

## **DAY 2**

Tuesday, May 17

9:00 am – 9:15 am

Recap main themes from previous day

9:15 am – 10:30 am

**EFFECTIVE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND CIVIL AFFAIRS**

- Overview of the international experience in supporting public administration after conflict
- How can public administration be used as an accountability mechanism?
- Tools and strategies for public administration reform

10:30 am – 10:45 am

**Break**

10:45 am – 12:00 pm

**Case Study Exercise II: Supporting Local Governance after Conflict**

- Introduction to case study

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm

**Lunch**

1:00 pm – 2:30 pm

**Case Study Exercise II: Analysis and Debate**

2:30 pm – 2:45 pm

**Break**

2:45 pm – 3:15 pm

**Case Study Exercise II: Debrief and Recommendations**

- Participants will present findings, identifying key challenges
- Recommendations will be discussed and included in “guidelines to governance and democratic practices”

3:15 pm – 3:30 pm

**Recap main themes of the day**

**DAY 3**

Wednesday, May 18

9:00 am – 9:15 am

Recap main themes from previous day

9:15 am – 10:45 am

**ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF INTERNATIONAL ACTORS**

- Discussion on the role of international actors
- The evolving role of the international community
- Developing standards and principles governing state-building missions
- The complex relationships among funding, organizational mandates, and groups intended to benefit

10:45 am – 11:00 am

**Break**

11:00 am – 12:30 am

**SUPPORTING GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES FOR ECONOMIC RECONSTRUCTION**

Guest Lecturer: *Raymond Gilpin*, Sustainable Economies Center of Innovation, U.S. Institute of Peace

- Examine the challenges to accountable fiscal management; accountable handling of natural resources; and combating corruption
- What are strategies for supporting local reform constituencies and pressure groups, as well as meeting transparency, inclusion, and participation needs?

12:30 am – 2:00 pm

**Lunch**

**Documentary**

*Iron Ladies of Liberia*

“After nearly two decades of brutal civil war, Liberia is a nation ready for change—on January 16, 2006, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was inaugurated the country’s first elected female president and Africa’s first freely elected female head of state. Johnson Sirleaf must not only find ways to reform a corrupt authoritarian government saddled by astronomical debts, but must also confront opponents loyal to former President Charles Taylor—all without alienating her voter base.” (*Independent Lens*)

2:00 pm – 3:00 pm      **Case Study: Liberia’s Governance and Economic Management Assistance Program**  
Guest Lecturer: *Raymond Gilpin*, Sustainable Economies Center of Innovation, U.S. Institute of Peace

3:00 pm – 3:15 pm      **Recap main themes of the day**

**DAY 4**

Thursday, May 19

9:00 am – 9:15 am      Recap main themes from previous day

9:15 am – 10:45 am      **STRENGTHENING LEGAL INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS**  
Guest Lecturer: *William O’Neill*, Social Science Research Council

- Discussion of linkages between the rule of law, democracy, human rights, and governance
- How can legal and institutional reform be used to support and promote democratic practices and governance?
- Discussion of alternative approaches to rule of law promotion
- Tools and strategies

10:45 am – 11:00 am      **Break**

11:00 am – 11:30 am      **THE ROLE OF ELECTIONS AND POLITICAL PARTIES**

- Discussion of timing, sequencing, and purpose of elections
- Trade-offs between inclusion and effective governance
- Challenges surrounding former armed combatants

11:30 am – 12:30 pm      **STRENGTHENING DEMOCRATIC OPENING IN DIVIDED SOCIETIES: THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY**  
Guest Lecturer: *Aaron Azelton*, National Democratic Institute for International Affairs

- In what ways can citizen participation be supported?
- Examining challenges to democracy building
- Work with the media, justice initiatives, etc.
- What are effective tools and approaches that civil society may employ in transition environments? What is the role of the international community in this context?

12:30 pm – 1:30 pm      **Lunch**  
**Documentary (partial)**

- *Confronting the Truth: Truth Commissions and Societies in*

*Transition*

“This film shows how countries, which have experienced massive human rights violations, have created official, independent bodies known as truth commissions. Since 1983, truth commissions have been established in over 20 countries, in all parts of the world. *Confronting the Truth* documents the work of truth commissions in South Africa, Peru, East Timor, and Morocco.” (*USIP*)

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm

**A MULTIDIMENSIONAL APPROACH TO GOVERNANCE**

- Developing a framework for best practices

2:00 pm – 2:15 pm

**Break**

2:15 pm – 3:00 pm

**Background Briefing on Iraq in Preparation for Final Simulation**

Guest Speaker: *Sean Kane*, U.S. Institute of Peace

3:00 pm – 3:30 pm

**Recap main themes**

- Explore necessary features for creating and strengthening democratic practices

**DAY 5**

Friday, May 20

**FINAL SIMULATION: PREPARING FOR ELECTIONS IN BASRA**

9:30 am – 3:15 pm

“Preparing for Elections in Basra” Scenario Exercise

3:15 pm – 4:00 pm

**Recap main themes**

- Debriefing of simulation exercise
- Debriefing of course overall
- Conclusions: Guidelines for Governance and Democratic Practices in War-to-Peace Transitions

4:00 pm

Course conclusion with distribution of certificates