



“Fragile Crescent”

SPF Holds Eleventh Secretary of Defense Strategic Policy Forum ~ Exercise Summary ~

The Institute for National Strategic Studies’ (INSS) National Strategic Gaming Center (NSGC) conducted “Fragile Crescent”, the eleventh in a series of Strategic Policy Forum exercises, at the National Defense University (NDU) on April 12, 2005. These crisis-simulation exercises, an initiative of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, are designed to give senior government officials insight into the nuance and complexity of policymaking in the current global security environment and to illuminate policy and organizational options for ensuring national security and the pursuit of U.S. interests. One hundred Members of Congress have participated in the eleven events, with many returning for several exercises.

Ambassador Johnnie Carson, Senior Vice President of NDU, welcomed the Members of Congress and Executive Branch officials. The Honorable Pete Geren, Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense, opened the forum, noting the importance of such exercises in understanding the vexing security challenges that South Asian regional instability and militant extremism present policy makers.



Hon. C. “Ryan” Henry, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Policy moderated a concluding discussion to the exercise.



Hon. Paula Dobriansky, Under Secretary of State for Global Affairs, facilitated the “hotwash” discussion, concluding the exercise.

Six Members of Congress participated in this forum along with representatives from the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Staff, the Department of State, the Department of Commerce, the National Intelligence Council and the US Agency for International Development. The officials provided the Members with perspective on current policies, plans, and assessments as well as advice with respect to scenario developments presenting in the exercise.

In “Fragile Crescent,” exercise participants examined the strategic implications of escalating tensions in South Asia. Participants evaluated policy options available to the

United States, its allies and other international partners to mitigate the potential effects of transnational extremism on South Asian stability and on other U.S. interests. As the exercise proceeded, participants considered all instruments of national power in addressing the security threats presented in South Asia by militant extremists with transnational reach. Further, they sought to understand the full range of policy alternatives and associated consequences available to the U.S. in promoting stability in region.

At the conclusion of the exercise, the Honorable C. "Ryan" Henry, Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Policy and the Honorable Paula Dobriansky, Under Secretary of State for Global Affairs, moderated a plenary review session during which Members offered the insights which they had gained over the course of the exercise. The exercise provided participants a better understanding of the complex security challenges presented to the United States in South Asia.

Comments from the bipartisan group of Members of Congress focused on the unique



opportunity presented by such exercises for enhancing understanding of critical national security issues and frank exchange between the branches of government. Below is an example of participant comments:

"The exercise illustrated the difficulty in formulating both the national and international response options to a threat of extremism and increasing transnational terror. I came away with a better understanding of how local insurgencies can complicate the security of that region."

Rep. Adam Putnam (R-12th FL) and BG Mark Phelan participate in exercise *Fragile Crescent* at NDU.

– Rep. Adam Putnam

<http://www.house.gov/putnam/pressreleases/ndu.doc>

Additional Information

Several more Strategic Policy Forum exercises are planned during 2005. For further information, please contact Col Chris Goggins, USAF, Director, Strategic Policy Forum, at (202) 685-4827, by email at gogginsc@ndu.edu.

You may also consult our webpage for new information on upcoming events by going to <http://www.ndu.edu/INSS/SPF>