

International Faculty Development Seminar

Seminar Site: Jordan

Dates: June 8 – June 15

of Participants: 11

Faculty Leader: Allison Hodgkins and Mohammad Mommani

During the week of June 8-14 2008, the Regional Human Security Center, in conjunction with the Council on International Educational Exchange, hosted esteemed members of academia from across the United States. The goal of the event was to provide understanding of the unique dynamics of the region from the unfiltered perspective of actors involved. The Regional Human Security Centre delivered the introductory address on June 9th and the closing session on June 14th, and as a host institution both in logistical and thematic terms, RHSC offered a wide variety of connections to speakers.

The opening address covered the general sources of conflict in the region and then present mechanisms in place to manage these conflicts. The seminar was divided between Jordan and Jerusalem. The main issues that were highlighted were economic cooperation and interfaith dialogue, as well as cooperation on the environment. Seminar spent 3 days in Jordan and 3 days in Jerusalem, with a total of 5 nights in Jordan and 2 in Jerusalem.. In the end, there were 9 official meetings, 4 site visits, 3 dinners and one debriefing session. To introduce the faculty to as many different perspectives as possible, there were speakers from different national, ethnic and religious backgrounds, as well as a mix between official and grassroots.

The week officially began with an introduction by RHSC Director Dr. Mohammad H. Al-Momani, briefly detailing the regional workings and players in the area and why the Middle East is so important to the world. A critical element of the week was the inclusion of expert dialogues, on site visits, and a two-day trip into Israel and the West Bank. Notable experts included Munther Haddaien, Youseff Mansour, and Mahadi Abdel-Hadi and visits to ACOR, UNWRA, and the Daniel Rossing Tour.

The participants were all very engaged, accommodating and very enjoyable to work with. They were also very appreciative of staff and speakers. This also speaks to the need for a less frenetic pace.

During the final round table discussion, RHSC and CIEE were praised for providing such a unique opportunity. Without the support of the RHSC and CIEE the group never would have experienced such a thorough portrayal of the Arab-Israeli world and it's many dimensions. The RHSC is confident that future events will share similar admiration.