

SPS supports training in the NATO ICI Regional Center

The Science for Peace and Security (SPS) Programme has completed the final course in a set of six tailor-made courses taught at the NATO ICI Regional Center in Kuwait. The courses addressed the **SPS Key Priorities in the fields of Energy Security, Defence against CBRN Agents, and Cyber Defence**, and were designed to deepen collaboration and forge networks among experts, and to enhance the security and defence capabilities of ICI countries.

The six tailor-made SPS activities aimed at promoting capacity building by developing essential skills in key areas of national security have been completed. These training courses have contributed to strengthening ties between countries in the Gulf region and NATO Allies. The delivery of the package of courses over the last two years coincides with the 15-year anniversary of the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) Partnership Framework.

A consolidated package of SPS Advanced Training Courses (ATCs) was developed following initial discussions between NATO Staff and Kuwaiti authorities on the margins of the SPS Information Day. The Information Day was held during the September 2017 *NATO Week* at the ICI Regional Center.

[Implementation of the courses began at the ICI Regional Centre in 2017](#), and the last course was completed on 17 October this year. Via these ATCs, a total of 37 speakers and lecturers trained 139 participants. The training courses were open to participants from all ICI countries, and attracted capable trainees from Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Oman. Speakers and participants came from areas such as the Ministry of Defence; the Ministry of Interior; the National Guard; Fire Service Directorate; the Ministry of Health; the Institute for Scientific Research; Civil Aviation; Environment Public Authority; Oil Sector of the State of Kuwait; Port Authority; Communications and Information Technology Regulatory Authority; IT specialists, network security administrators, technicians and engineers from different governmental agencies representing all the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, and more.

The SPS Programme will continue to engage ICI partners in scientific research and development activities, fostering regional security and cooperation. There is interest in another set of “Train the Trainer” cyber and energy courses that would help experts in the region to develop their own expertise and courses.

1. [Comprehensive CBRN Incident Commanders Course, 3-7 December 2017](#)

This course helped to develop the security standards required for successful cooperation during and in the aftermath of CBRN incidents, aligning them to international requirements. *Outcome: 7 speakers and 16 participants from the Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Interior, National Guard, Fire Service, Ministry of Health, Institute for Scientific Research, Civil Aviation, Environment Public Authority and Oil Sector of the State of Kuwait completed the training.*

2. [Critical Energy Infrastructure Protection \(CEIP\) Course, 11-15 February 2018](#)

ICI countries are heavily reliant on energy exports, and critical energy infrastructure can be an attractive target for those seeking to undermine the stability of the region. This course addressed critical infrastructure vulnerabilities. *Outcome: The course was attended by 12 speakers and 31 trainees from 7 different governmental institutions (Ministry of Defence,*

Ministry of Interior, National Guard, Fire Service Directorate, Port Authority, Council of Ministers Security Decisions Follow up Committee and Communications and Information Technology Regulatory Authority) and 3 oil companies.

3. [CBRN Awareness for First Responders Course, 18-22 March 2018](#)

This course provided first responders with a common knowledge base and a minimum level of preparedness in responding to CBRN incidents. This course was a follow-up to the CBRN Incident Commanders Course in December 2017.

Outcome: *3 speakers and 29 trainees from ministries, oil companies, and other relevant institutions from three ICI Partner countries (Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain), as well as Saudi Arabia, completed the course. The ATC helped to improve participants' current preparedness and enhance the ability of their emergency response organizations to meet their performance objectives.*

4. [Critical Energy Infrastructure Protection and Resilience Course, 10-14 March 2019](#)

Building off of the positive outcome of the first course, a second Critical Energy Infrastructure Protection and Resilience Course was organized for the NATO ICI Regional Center. It addressed the challenges of protecting national critical energy infrastructure

Outcome: *9 speakers and 23 trainees from Kuwait, Qatar and Saudi Arabia from different governmental institutions, as well as two oil companies, successfully completed the training.*

5. [Introduction to Network Security Course, 24 March-4 April 2019](#)

This training provided students with a thorough conversational knowledge of the dominant terminology and principles involved in the bits-in-transit aspect network security. The course covered four main areas of network security: Network Functionality, Traffic Analysis, Core Principles, and Filtering Principles.

Outcome: *The course gathered 6 speakers and 20 trainees from Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.*

6. [Introduction to Network Vulnerability Course, 6-17 October 2019](#)

This final course in the consolidated package provided students with an understanding of the methods and operations used to exploit cyber networks. Students learned how to describe the methodology used to assess the vulnerability of an organization connected to the internet, and current types of vulnerabilities.

Outcome: *The course brought together 20 IT specialists, network security administrators, technicians and engineers from different governmental agencies representing all the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. In closing remarks, Colonel Brian Hill, USA-AF, the NSO Dean of Academics underlined that "The security and stability of the region heavily depend on reliable cyber infrastructure, and these courses represent a significant added value to NATO's efforts on projecting stability to the South of the Alliance."*

