

Call for Papers: Workshop on
Reforming Defense and Military Policy-Making in New Democracies: Obstacles, Opportunities
and Outcomes

Ensuring effective civilian control over the institutions and processes of defense and military policy-making is a core step in the process of institutionalizing, deepening and consolidating democratic governance in newly democratized nations. While a certain degree of organizational autonomy and the provision of military expertise to civilian decision makers is functional, perhaps necessary, for the armed forces to fulfill their missions, the reform of defense policy-making procedures has been among the most problematic and protracted political endeavors in many nations of the so called “Third Wave of democratization”. Even countries that today are considered successful cases of democratic consolidation have struggled with—and are still struggling with—stalled, unsuccessful, incomplete or inconsistent attempts at reforming national defense and military policy. This not only has possibly serious consequences for the aspect of democratic control and accountability of policy-making in this crucial area of state activity. It also raises the question if and how these reforms for greater civilian authority and oversight (or their lack) affect the effectiveness of defense policy and the ability of new democracies to defend themselves against external threats.

In order to address these issues, we are planning to host a workshop at the Institute of Political Science, Heidelberg University, Germany in January 2015. We are inviting scholars to send in paper proposals that address the following two sets of questions:

1. How did the institutions, actors and processes of defense policy-making develop after the transition to democracy in “Third Wave” democracies, especially in the light of a strengthening of civilian decision-making authority and oversight? How can these developments be explained from the perspective of the political institutions, processes and actors?
2. How did these reforms, or their lack, affect the effectiveness of defense policy and the functionality of national defense apparatuses in these countries?

We are interested in receiving proposals that combine deep empirical knowledge and theoretical reasoning in single-country studies that trace the developments of defense reforms in new democracies, or specialized micro-case studies that focus on individual reforms or reform attempts, such as National Defense Laws, Defense Reorganization Acts, etc.

Paper proposals (max. 500 words) should be sent to David Kuehn (david.kuehn@ipw.uni-heidelberg.de) and Aurel Croissant (aurel.croissant@ipw.uni-heidelberg.de) by 1 August 2014. We will decide on the program by 1 September 2014.

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