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DRMI Builds Albanian Partnership

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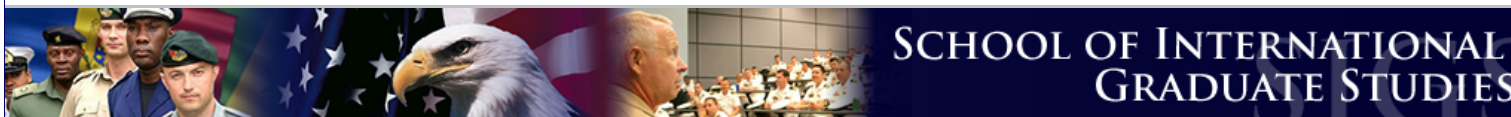
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By Kate Lamar

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Defense Resource Management Institute (DRMI) faculty members Diana Angelis, Al Polley and Natalie Webb traveled to Durrës, Albania in January to conduct a course on Mobile International Defense Management for the Albanian Ministry of Defense. The course is a regular offering at DRMI that aims to help senior military leaders define and evaluate competing options within defense organizations on both the strategic and operational levels.

“DRMI contributes to defense institution building by presenting concepts and principles that help decision-makers allocate their resources more effectively to meet their various needs,” said Al Polley, International Programs Manager for DRMI. “We provide analytical frameworks that are useful in evaluating tradeoffs among alternatives by considering costs, capabilities, and risks while addressing current and future needs.”

During the course the participants worked through a number of realistic scenarios that were designed to spark discussion about how best to distribute scarce defense resources.

“Albania has transitioned quickly from communism to democracy,” said Polley. “Under communism, decision-making was very centralized, and subordinates never developed decision-making skills.”

The Albanian military is working hard to overcome those challenges. One example of this is the participation of key military leaders in the DRMI programs.

“The Albanians DRMI has worked with have all been extremely enthusiastic about our courses. In many ways, they are the perfect students—highly motivated and well placed to make a difference within their organization,” said Polley.

The week-long course was the latest in a series of educational programs DRMI has organized for Albania that have taken place both in the U.S. and Albania. The courses represent a growing partnership between the U.S. and Albanian militaries.

“Working with the Albanians helps them resolve issues, build institutions and systems, and move forward in their transition to democracy and a stable environment,” said Dr. Natalie Webb, Associate Professor at DRMI. “It also improves relationships between the U.S. and U.S. military personnel and their counterparts in Albania, improving understanding of cultures and situations and helping to forge longer-term stability critical to both the U.S. and Albania.”

“The U.S. has supported Albania’s transition because of its geo-political importance in the Balkans. It is important to our interests that Albania be politically stable in a region where one crisis has followed another for the last 20 years,” said Polley.

DRMI teaches management courses as part of their larger mission of enhancing the effective allocation and use of resources in allied defense organizations around the world.

Photo Courtesy of Al Polley