

Partners and Trainers – SSR Core Course

1. General Background



This course was in 2009 on the initiative of the Austrian MOD, bringing several international experts and stakeholders together. It has since been continuously reviewed and improved and is now a highly demanded comprehensive training on SSR for mid-level practitioners, bringing extensive expertise and allowing an excellent learning experience for the participants through a very interactive training methodology.

2. Austrian MOD Trainers

Course Director



Kurt Meissner is the Head of the Security Sector Reform and Defence Sector Reform Section in the Austrian Ministry of Defence Implementation Office for Arms Control and International Stabilization Measures. He attended various international courses and seminars in the fields of SSR, Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR), Building Integrity and Leadership Training, Small Arms and Light Weapons and Arms Control. Kurt is Chair of the Executive Academic Board on SSR Training in the European Security and Defence College. Prior to his current posting he was instructor in the Austrian Armed Forces Peace Support Operations Training Centre. He served altogether four years in international peace-keeping missions in the Middle East, Cambodia, and Rwanda

Technical Moderator

Bernhard Frankl holds the position of a Desk Officer in the SSR/DSR Section of the Implementation Office for Arms Control and International Stabilization Measures in the Federal Ministry of Defence of Austria since 2014. From 2018 to 2020 Bernhard was seconded to the OSCE as Deputy Head of the Conflict Prevention and Resolution Programme to the OSCE Mission to Moldova. From 2016 to 2017 he was seconded as Head of the Politico-Military Programme to the OSCE Office in Yerevan. Before joining the SSR/DSR section of the Federal Ministry of Defence of Austria, he was a research fellow in the Institute for Peace Support and Conflict Management at the National Defence Academy. Prior to this he held a variety of positions in the Austrian Armed Forces Intelligence Agency. Bernhard served abroad in various Peacekeeping missions including EUFOR/Althea.

3. DCAF/ISSAT Trainers

For the first part of the course, which aims at recapitulating the whole of the SSR concept and ensure that standards and concepts are reviewed, the AUT MOD regularly requests professional support from ISSAT's expert roster for the Core Course on SSR, being a member of the ISSAT Governing Board.



DCAF/ISSAT is a key stakeholder in SSR subject matter expertise and provides support to the international community to reinforce and strengthen their individual and collective efforts to improve security and justice, primarily in conflict-affected and fragile states. For more information, please click here: <https://issat.dcaf.ch/>

For our course, the following experts are usually made available:

Sami Faltas, PhD, is a former academic, now working as a consultant and trainer, using English, German, Dutch, and French. Security Sector Reform, DDR, democratic governance, and political negotiation are currently his main topics. His work has taken him all over Africa, Western and Eastern Europe, the Balkans, and the Caucasus, as well as the Middle East and Central Asia. His clients include the European Union, the United Nations, the OSCE and the governments of Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, and the UK. He has been teaching at the University of Groningen at the department of International Relations. Originally from Egypt, he grew up in the Netherlands and worked in Germany for several years.



Heather Huhtanen is currently based in Geneva, Switzerland where she works to promote gender equality in the context of international development, security and justice reform and peace and transition processes. She is a regular course facilitator and presenter for DCAF-ISSAT. Presently Heather is serving as an (independent) advisor for DCAF under the auspices of the Canadian Elsie Initiative, *Reducing Barriers for Uniformed Women UN Peace Operations Project*. Her role is to provide dedicated support and technical assistance to the Ghana Armed Forces and Zambia Police Service on gender equality and security sector governance/development. Heather holds a master's degree in International Development with a specialization in Women, Gender and Development from Erasmus University, Institute of Social Studies in The Netherlands.

4. International Subject Matter Experts

In the second part of the course, we bring in several international experts who have significant first-hand experience in various aspects of an SSR process. Depending on the availability of the speakers, subsequent listed topics are planned to be included:

- EU Approach to SSR
- UN approach to SSR
- OSCE Approach to SSG/R
- NATO Approach to SSR
- Building Integrity
- Defence Sector Reform
- Police Reform
- Integrated Border Management
- Transitional Justice
- Penitentiary Reform and Reintegration
- Disarmament Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR)
- Small Arms and Light Weapons Control (SALW)