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INTERNATIONAL  
MILITARY  
EDUCATION AND  
TRAINING

Agencies Should  
Emphasize Human  
Rights Training and  
Improve Evaluations

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## Why GAO Did This Study

Since 1976, the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program has provided education and training to foreign military personnel. The program's objectives include professionalizing military forces and increasing respect for democratic values and human rights. In 2010, Congress appropriated \$108 million in IMET funding for more than 120 countries. The Department of State (State) and the Department of Defense (DOD) share responsibility for IMET. In response to a mandate in the conference report accompanying the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2010, this report assesses (1) changes in the program from fiscal years 2000 to 2010, by funding levels, students trained, and recipient countries; (2) the program's provision of and emphasis on human rights training for its students; and (3) the extent to which State and DOD monitor IMET graduates and evaluate program effectiveness. GAO reviewed and analyzed agency funding, planning, and performance management documents, and interviewed U.S. officials in Washington, D.C., and overseas.

## What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that the Secretaries of State and Defense (1) ensure human rights training is a priority in IMET recipient countries with known human rights concerns, and (2) take initial steps to begin developing a system to evaluate the effectiveness of the IMET program, including adopting existing evaluation practices used by other State and DOD agencies and soliciting IMET training managers for suggestions on improving monitoring and evaluation efforts. State and DOD both concurred with our recommendations.

View [GAO-12-123](#). For more information, contact Charles Michael Johnson, Jr. at (202) 512-7331 or [johnsoncm@gao.gov](mailto:johnsoncm@gao.gov)

# INTERNATIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING

## Agencies Should Emphasize Human Rights Training and Improve Evaluations

### What GAO Found

Although IMET funding has increased by more than 70 percent since fiscal year 2000, the number of students trained has decreased by nearly 14 percent. Over the last 10 years, countries in the Europe and Eurasia region have continued to receive the largest portion of IMET funding, receiving \$30 million in 2010. However, all regions have received increased IMET funding since fiscal year 2000, with the levels of funding to the Near East and South and Central Asia regions more than doubling from fiscal year 2000 to fiscal year 2010. Professional military education represents the largest single use of IMET funds—nearly 50 percent in fiscal year 2010. Other major types of training funded by IMET include English language training and technical training, which represented 13 and 11 percent, respectively, of fiscal year 2010 IMET program costs.

Training to build respect for internationally recognized human rights standards is provided to IMET students through various in-class and field-based courses, but human rights training was generally not identified as a priority in the IMET country training plans GAO reviewed. IMET students primarily receive human rights training through human rights courses that focus on promoting democratic values, and through a voluntary program that sends them on visits to democratically oriented institutions. However, human rights and related concepts were identified as key objectives in only 11 of the 29 country training plans GAO reviewed for IMET participant countries that received low rankings for political and civil freedoms by Freedom House, an independent nongovernmental organization. Furthermore, 7 of the 12 training managers GAO interviewed from countries that received low to moderate rankings for political and civil freedoms said that human rights was not a priority compared to other IMET objectives.

State and DOD's ability to assess IMET's effectiveness is limited by several weaknesses in program monitoring and evaluation. First, State and DOD have not established a performance plan for IMET that explains how the program is expected to achieve its goals and how progress can be assessed through performance measures and targets. Second, State and DOD have limited information on most IMET graduates, due to weaknesses in efforts to monitor these graduates' careers after training. DOD has collected updated career information on only 1 percent of IMET graduates. Training managers identified limited resources and lack of host country cooperation as among the key challenges to monitoring IMET graduates. Third, the agencies' current evaluation efforts include few of the evaluation elements commonly accepted as appropriate for measuring progress of training programs, and do not objectively measure how IMET contributes to long-term, desired program outcomes. The agencies could incorporate existing evaluation practices, including those of other State and DOD entities, or suggestions from training managers overseas to improve IMET monitoring and evaluation efforts. IMET training managers have offered suggestions for improving monitoring efforts, such as by clarifying DOD's monitoring guidance and strengthening DOD's IMET data systems. Training managers also offered ideas to improve program evaluations, such as surveying U.S. military groups to assess participant nations' proficiency in key areas, assessing career progress of IMET graduates against non-IMET graduates in specific countries, and testing students before and after training to measure changes in knowledge or attitudes.

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## Abbreviations

BSRP	Bureau Strategic Resource Plan
DOD	Department of Defense
DSCA	Defense Security Cooperation Agency
E-IMET	Expanded-IMET
IMET	International Military Education and Training
PME	professional military education
SCO	Security Cooperation Office
State	Department of State

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G A O

Accountability \* Integrity \* Reliability

United States Government Accountability Office  
Washington, DC 20548

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October 27, 2011

The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy  
Chairman  
The Honorable Lindsey Graham  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on the Department of State,  
Foreign Operations, and Related Programs  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Chairman  
The Honorable Nita Lowey  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations,  
and Related Programs  
Committee on Appropriations  
House of Representatives

Since 1976, the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program has provided education and training to foreign military personnel.<sup>1</sup> The program's objectives include strengthening recipient nations' defense capabilities, professionalizing military forces, and increasing foreign militaries' respect for democratic values and human rights. In 2010, Congress appropriated \$108 million in IMET funding for more than 120 countries. The Department of State (State) and the Department of Defense (DOD) share responsibility for IMET program policy making and management. In 1990, we found that the agencies had no system for evaluating IMET program impact or guidelines for monitoring the use of IMET graduates. We recommended that State and DOD jointly develop a system to evaluate the effectiveness of the IMET program.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Congress established the IMET program in the International Security Assistance and Arms Export Control Act of 1976 (Pub. L. No. 94-329, June 30, 1976), which amended the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (Pub. L. No. 87-195, Sept. 4, 1961).

<sup>2</sup>GAO, *Security Assistance: Observations on the International Military Education and Training Program*, [NSIAD-90-215BR](#) (Washington, D.C.: June 14, 1990).

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The conference report accompanying the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2010 directed us to evaluate the effectiveness of the IMET program in building professionalism and respect for human rights within foreign military forces.<sup>3</sup> This report assesses (1) changes in the program from fiscal years 2000 to 2010, by funding levels, number of students trained, and recipient countries, by region; (2) the program's provision of and emphasis on human rights training for its students; and (3) the extent to which State and DOD monitor IMET graduates and evaluate program effectiveness.

To address these objectives, we reviewed U.S. laws related to the IMET program. We interviewed officials from multiple State bureaus and DOD entities, including the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA), geographic combatant commands, and several military departments and U.S. military schools. To address the first objective, we analyzed State and DSCA documents related to IMET funding allocations and number of students trained by training type and geographic region. We used fiscal year 2000 as our starting point because, according to DSCA, their data were unreliable prior to that year. To address the second objective, we analyzed selected training plans from IMET participant countries and curriculum documents from several DOD schools. To address the third objective, we assessed State and DOD IMET performance management documents; reviewed our prior reports on recommended training evaluation practices; interviewed IMET training managers from 20 countries, choosing a selection of higher-funded countries with a range of host country political rights and civil liberties conditions; and surveyed all 123 IMET training managers worldwide, receiving 70 completed survey responses.<sup>4</sup>

We conducted this performance audit from June 2010 through October 2011 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings

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<sup>3</sup>See H.R. Conf. Rep. No. 111-366 Accompanying the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2010 (Pub. L. No. 111-117, Dec. 16, 2009).

<sup>4</sup>Our response rate for this survey was 57 percent. As a result, we do not generalize the survey results to the entire population of IMET training managers.

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and conclusions based on our audit objectives. (See app. I for a complete discussion of our scope and methodology.)

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## Background

The IMET program was established in 1976 to provide military education and training to foreign security forces. The purpose of the program is to:

- encourage effective and mutually beneficial relations and increased understanding between the United States and foreign countries in furtherance of the goals of international peace and security;
- improve the ability of participating foreign countries to utilize their resources, including defense articles and defense services obtained by them from the United States, with maximum effectiveness, thereby contributing to greater self-reliance; and
- increase the awareness of foreign nationals participating in such activities of basic issues involving internationally recognized human rights.<sup>5</sup>

In 1990, Congress expanded the objectives of the IMET program to focus on fostering greater understanding of and respect for civilian control of the military, contributing to responsible defense resource management, and improving military justice systems and procedures in accordance with internationally recognized human rights. Congress also authorized civilians working in nondefense ministries, legislators, and nongovernmental groups to participate in courses that were developed to address the expanded IMET program objectives. State and DOD refer to the expanded IMET objectives as Expanded-IMET (E-IMET).

State and DOD share responsibility for IMET. State, in addition to determining each country's eligibility for security assistance programs as well as the scope of security assistance and funding level for each country, also identifies the annual IMET goals and objectives for each country through the Congressional Budget Justification. DOD, through DSCA, is responsible for developing the administrative policy and administering program guidance and direction to the military departments

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<sup>5</sup>22 USC § 2347.

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and their training field activities.<sup>6</sup> The IMET program trains participants at more than 180 U.S. military schools and overseas, according to DSCA. IMET-funded training courses can range from approximately 5 weeks to more than 10 months.<sup>7</sup>

Training managers in U.S. Security Cooperation Offices (SCO) overseas implement IMET, with support and oversight from DOD's geographic combatant commands. SCOs help IMET recipient countries identify, plan, and program training that meets U.S. and host nation objectives. SCO training managers work with host nation counterparts to identify qualified training candidates and monitor IMET participants after graduation.<sup>8</sup>

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## IMET Funding Appropriated and the Number of Students Trained Have Changed over the Past 10 Fiscal Years

While IMET funding appropriated has increased by more than 70 percent since fiscal year 2000, the number of students trained has declined by nearly 14 percent. Countries in the Europe and Eurasia region received the largest portion of IMET funding in fiscal years 2000 and 2010, though all regions have received increased IMET funding since fiscal year 2000. Professional military education represented the largest single use of IMET funds in fiscal year 2010.

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<sup>6</sup>These include the Army Training and Doctrine Command, Security Assistance Training Field Activity; the Air Force Security Assistance Training Squadron; the Naval Education and Training Security Assistance Field Activity; the Marine Corps Security Cooperation Education and Training Center; and the Coast Guard International Affairs and Foreign Policy.

<sup>7</sup>According to DSCA, to be more cost-effective, DOD courses less than 5 weeks in total duration require DSCA and Combatant Command policy waivers before being programmed, unless the country agrees to pay for transportation. E-IMET and other short duration courses that are listed in the Security Assistance Management Manual are exceptions to the waiver requirement.

<sup>8</sup>According to the Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management's *The Management of Security Assistance*, students are selected to participate in the IMET program based on such considerations as their leadership potential and likelihood of being assigned, subsequent to IMET participation, to a job relevant to their training for a period of time to warrant the training expense.



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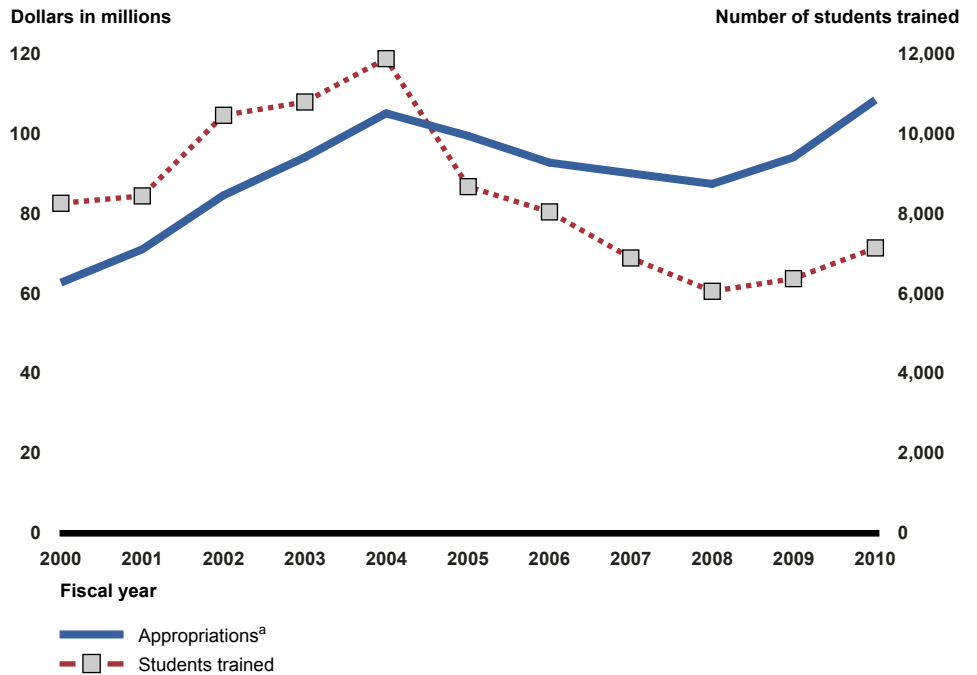
**Despite Increase in IMET  
Funding, Number of  
Students Trained Has  
Declined**

From fiscal years 2000 to 2010, funding appropriated for the IMET program rose from approximately \$62 million<sup>9</sup> to \$108 million. While IMET funding has generally increased in that 10-year period, the number of students trained declined from approximately 8,200 to nearly 7,100 (see fig. 1). Moreover, this total dropped by 40 percent between fiscal years 2004 and 2010. Furthermore, between fiscal years 2000 and 2010, administrative costs for the IMET program increased from \$765,000 to more than \$5 million. The IMET funding per student rose from nearly \$6,100 per student in fiscal year 2000 to approximately \$15,000 per student in fiscal year 2010.

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<sup>9</sup>This figure represents inflation-adjusted dollars. The nominal value of fiscal year 2000 IMET appropriations was nearly \$50 million. This amount reflects a 0.38 percent across the board rescission for fiscal year 2000.

**Figure 1: Number of Students Trained Compared to IMET Funding Appropriated, Fiscal Years 2000 and 2010**



Source: State Congressional Budget Justifications.

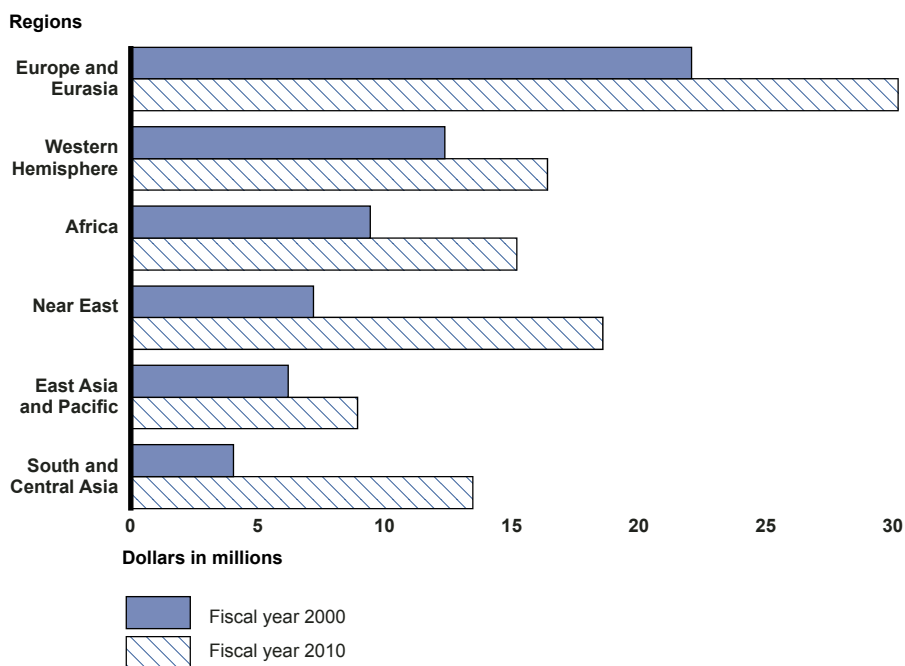
<sup>a</sup>The appropriations shown in this figure have been converted to 2010 dollars.

DOD officials attributed the decline in the number of students trained to several factors. For example, according to a DOD official, after 2004, per diem costs for foreign military students were adjusted to match the per diems of U.S. students, resulting in higher overall per student training costs. In addition, a DOD official said international student housing has become costlier due in part to reduced availability of low-cost military base housing. A DOD official also noted another cause of the higher overall per student training cost was increased tuition rates because of increased instructor cost. This official stated this was primarily because military instructors are in Afghanistan and Iraq, and therefore more resident DOD courses are taught by government civilians or contractors.

## Europe and Eurasia Continue to Receive the Largest Share of IMET Funding

Countries in the Europe and Eurasia region received the largest portion of IMET funding in fiscal years 2000 and 2010, receiving approximately \$22 million<sup>10</sup> in fiscal year 2000 and more than \$30 million in 2010 (see fig. 2). However, all regions have received increased IMET funding since 2000, with the levels of funding to the Near East and South and Central Asia regions more than doubling from fiscal year 2000 to fiscal year 2010.

**Figure 2: IMET Funding Appropriated, by Region, for Fiscal Years 2000 and 2010**



Source: GAO analysis of State Congressional Budget Justifications.

Note: Fiscal year 2000 appropriations are shown in 2010 dollars for comparison over time. This figure does not include administrative costs, which were \$765,000 in fiscal year 2000 and \$5.2 million in fiscal year 2010.

<sup>10</sup>This figure represents inflation-adjusted dollars. The nominal value would be nearly \$18 million in 2010 dollars.

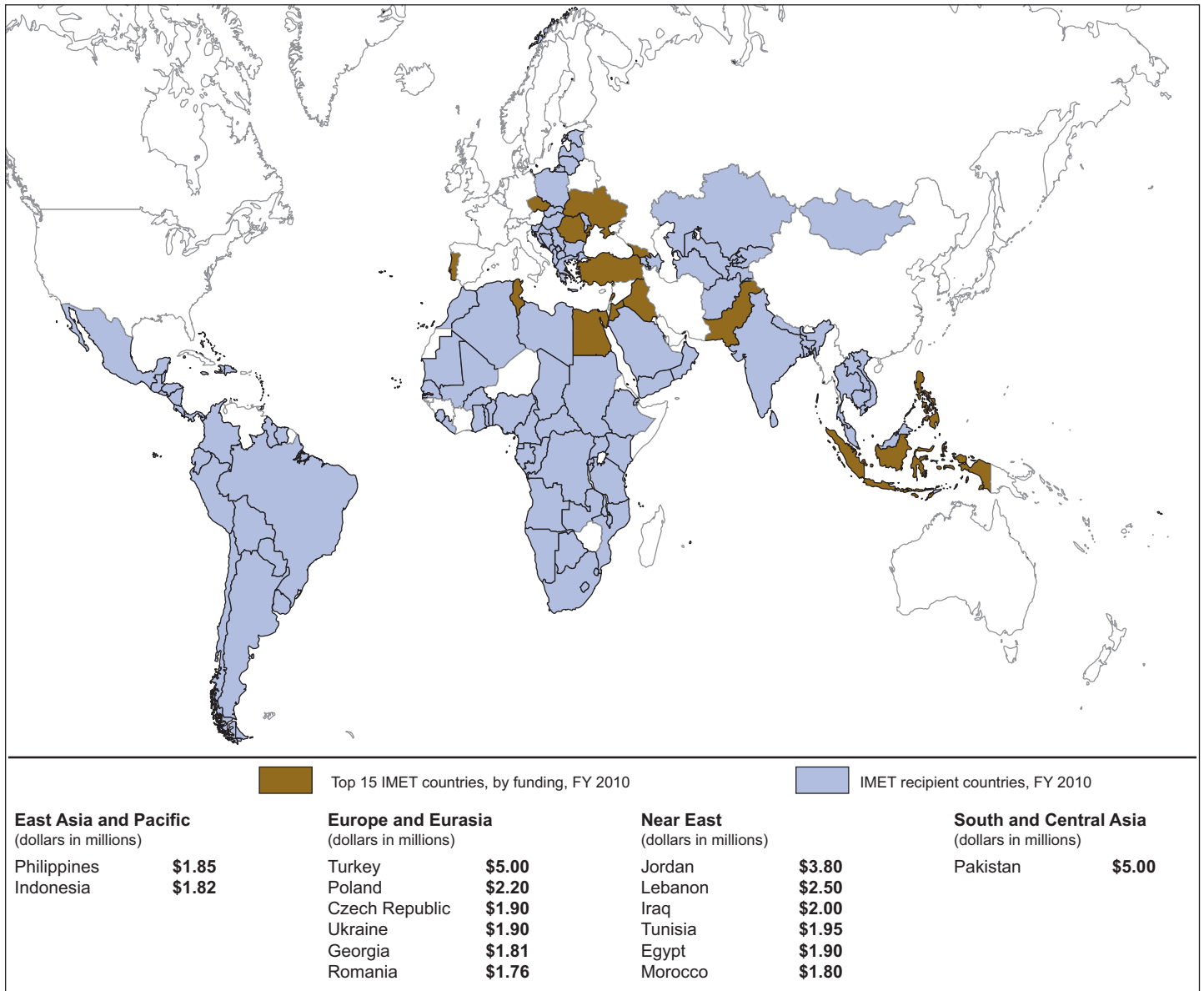
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In fiscal year 2000, total IMET funding provided to 109 countries ranged from nearly \$28,000 to nearly \$2.2 million,<sup>11</sup> while in fiscal year 2010 it ranged from \$7,000 to \$5 million for 125 countries. The top 15 IMET countries by funding level for fiscal year 2010 accounted for almost 35 percent of the total program allocation (see fig. 3). Appendix II includes a list of funding levels for all IMET recipient countries in fiscal year 2010.

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<sup>11</sup>These figures represent inflation-adjusted dollars. The nominal values would be \$22,000 and more than \$1.7 million.

**Figure 3: Top 15 Funded IMET Recipient Countries, Fiscal Year 2010**

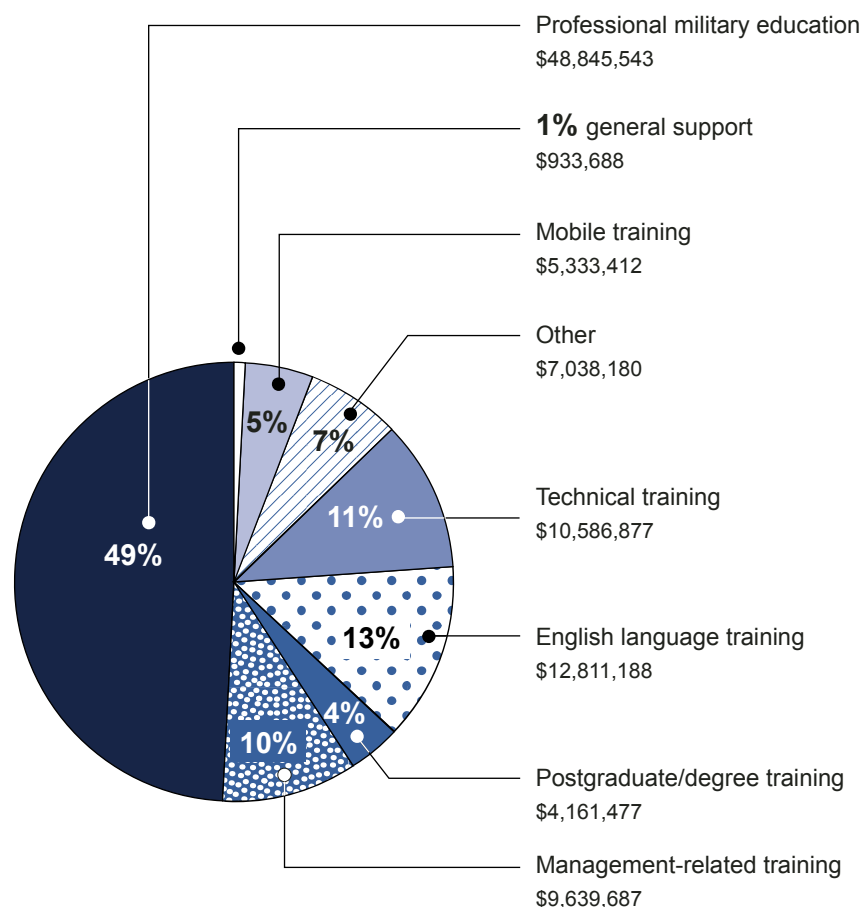


Sources: GAO analysis of State Congressional Budget Justifications; Map Resources (map).

## Professional Military Education Accounts for Nearly Half of IMET Funding

Professional military education (PME) accounted for nearly \$50 million of IMET program costs in fiscal year 2010 (see fig. 4). PME includes basic and advanced levels of training—in areas such as finance, intelligence, and logistics—intended to prepare military officers for leadership. According to DSCA, PME is generally longer and costlier than other IMET training types; despite representing nearly half of program costs, it accounted for about a quarter of IMET students (1,895 students) in fiscal year 2010.

**Figure 4: IMET Training Breakdown by Program Cost, Fiscal Year 2010**



Sources: GAO analysis of State and DOD data.

In fiscal year 2010, English language training comprised nearly \$13 million, or 13 percent, of program costs, and was attended by 453 IMET students. This training is for students who must gain English language proficiency in order to attend other IMET-funded courses. Technical

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training—in areas such as maintenance and operations—comprised nearly \$11 million, or 11 percent, and 830 students attended this training. Other types of IMET-funded training for fiscal year 2010 include:

- management-related training for officers and enlisted technicians and supervisors in management of defense organizations and defense-related areas such as information technology, logistics, engineering, and others (357 students);
- postgraduate/degree training to obtain master's degrees at the Naval Postgraduate School or the Air Force Institute of Technology (53 students); and
- mobile training courses taught by DOD military, civilian, and contractor personnel in the recipient country that can address subjects such as military justice, peacekeeping operations, and rules of engagement and the use of force (5,586 students).<sup>12</sup>

IMET-funded training varies by region and nation to meet the country's needs as determined by State, DOD, and recipient nations. For example, in fiscal year 2010, 29 percent of Iraq's IMET funding supported language training and 13 percent supported PME. Comparable percentages for Pakistan in 2010 were 1 percent and 32 percent, respectively. In another example, mobile training courses constituted 52 percent of IMET funding for Angola in fiscal year 2010, but only 4 percent for Montenegro. These countries had comparable funding levels in 2010.

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<sup>12</sup>The sum total of students we report as having attended PME, English language, technical, management, postgraduate/degree, and mobile training is greater than the total number of IMET students trained in fiscal year 2010. According to DSCA, this is due to a certain number of individual students who attended more than one training type in fiscal year 2010, such as students who attended English language training prior to attending another IMET-funded course.

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## IMET Offers Human Rights Training but Does not Emphasize It in Many Countries of Concern

IMET students can receive human rights training through several venues, including human-rights focused courses and field visits to democratic institutions. However, only about a quarter of IMET country training plans we reviewed for participant countries with poor records of political and civil freedoms cited human rights as a U.S. program objective.

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## IMET Provides Some Human Rights Training through Classroom and Field Courses

Some IMET students attend E-IMET-certified courses with an explicit focus on human rights and related concepts.<sup>13</sup> As of February 2010, 141 E-IMET certified courses were offered. Seven focused on human rights, rule of law, or international military law. These included courses on establishing civil-military relations and international law of military operations. A total of 79 IMET students took human rights courses in fiscal year 2010 at the Defense Institute of International Legal Studies, which, along with the Naval Postgraduate School, provides E-IMET courses on human rights. The Defense Institute of International Legal Studies offers courses including the law of armed conflict and human rights, and rule of law, and an additional 798 IMET students took mobile training related to human rights in fiscal year 2010. All IMET students in the master's degree program at the Naval Postgraduate School are required to take a seminar on American life and institutions that includes one class on human rights. While a Naval Postgraduate School official was unable to provide an exact number, he said approximately a quarter of the 99 students who took the seminar in 2010 were IMET students.

In addition, the Field Studies Program increases awareness of human rights and American values through visits to institutions that promote democratic concepts such as media outlets and universities. According to DOD guidance,<sup>14</sup> the Field Studies Program should include discussion with the students about topics such as the U.S. government structure, judicial system, and political party system, and the way in which all of

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<sup>13</sup>A certain percentage of a country's IMET program must be selected from a list of courses designated, by DSCA, as E-IMET-certified. These courses are certified as such if DSCA determines that at least 51 percent of their content addresses E-IMET's stated objectives, including responsible defense resource management, respect for and understanding of the principle of civilian control of the military, military justice systems, and procedures in accordance with internationally recognized human rights.

<sup>14</sup>See DOD 5105.38-M, Security Assistance Management Manual, C10.11.



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these elements reflect the U.S. commitment to the basic principles of internationally recognized human rights. As part of the Field Studies Program, IMET students have visited state and local government offices, a local police department, academic institutions, major defense contractors, the United Nations, and the Statue of Liberty.

In addition, students may receive PME-related human rights training. We interviewed officials and reviewed curricula from several military schools that provide PME training. These officials told us that human rights content was integrated broadly into the DOD PME curriculum, and not as a standalone course. One exception among schools that offer PME training is the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation. The institute provides human rights training as part of its democracy and human rights curriculum through five legislatively mandated subjects, including human rights, rule of law, and civilian control of the military. A total of 464 IMET students received human rights training at the institute in fiscal year 2010.

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### Country Training Plans Cited Human Rights to a Limited Extent

We reviewed training plans for the 29 IMET participant nations ranked as “not free” by an independent nongovernmental organization called Freedom House, and found that only 8 of those plans cited human rights as a program objective (see table 1).<sup>15</sup> For example, the training plan for Turkmenistan—which Freedom House included among the nine countries that received the lowest possible rating for both political freedom and civil liberties—did not cite human rights among program objectives that included building naval force capacity, exposing military leaders to U.S. society, and increasing English language capability. The training plan for Chad highlighted counterterrorism and the role of the military in a democracy. It did not cite human rights, though State has documented

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<sup>15</sup>Freedom House conducts an annual survey of the state of global freedom as experienced by individuals. The survey is intended to measure freedom—defined as the opportunity to act spontaneously in a variety of fields outside the control of the government and other centers of potential domination—according to two broad categories: political rights and civil liberties. We utilized Freedom House assessments on freedom as a proxy for human rights rankings. State has used Freedom House rankings as an indicator to measure progress toward the agency’s strategic goal: “Governing Justly and Democratically.” This goal includes advancing respect for human rights. Of IMET recipient countries for fiscal year 2010, Freedom House ranked 46 countries as “free,” 48 as “partly free,” and 31 as “not free” (see app. II for a full listing of IMET participant countries and their Freedom House rankings). See Freedom House, *Freedom in the World 2011* (Jan. 13, 2011).

various human rights abuses in the country, including extrajudicial killings and security force impunity. Even when including related terms, such as rule of law and civil-military relations, only 11 out of the 29 plans we reviewed could be reasonably interpreted as mentioning either human rights or these other human rights-related concepts. For example, the country training plan for Cameroon did not explicitly note the importance of human rights but noted an objective to reinforce responsible civil-military relationships.

**Table 1: Types of Human Rights-Related Objectives Identified as Priorities for 29 Countries Ranked as Not Free**

Country	Human rights-related concepts				
	Human rights	Rule of law	Civil-military relations	Military justice	Other
<b>Africa</b>					
Angola					
Cameroon			✓		
Chad					
Democratic Republic of the Congo					✓
Djibouti					
Ethiopia	✓		✓		
Gabon					
Mauritania	✓				
Republic of the Congo	✓	✓	✓		
Rwanda					
Sudan			✓		
Swaziland	✓				
<b>East Asia and the Pacific</b>					
Cambodia	✓	✓	✓		
Laos					
Vietnam					
<b>Europe and Eurasia</b>					
Azerbaijan					
<b>Near East<sup>a</sup></b>					
Algeria					
Bahrain					
Egypt					

Country	Human rights-related concepts				
	Human rights	Rule of law	Civil-military relations	Military justice	Other
Iraq					
Jordan	✓				
Oman	✓				
Tunisia	✓		✓		
Yemen					
<b>South and Central Asia</b>					
Afghanistan					
Kazakhstan					
Tajikistan					
Turkmenistan					
Uzbekistan					

Source: GAO analysis of DOD and Freedom House data.

<sup>a</sup>Though Libya received IMET funds in fiscal year 2010, it was excluded from this analysis because program money was withdrawn for fiscal year 2011 and no current training plan exists. Based on information from a State official, Saudi Arabia also was excluded from this analysis because of the limited size and scope of its IMET program.

We also interviewed 20 SCO training managers from IMET recipient countries representing a mix of Freedom House rankings, including 12 countries ranked as “partly free” or “not free.” Seven of the 12 training managers said human rights was not a consideration or priority compared to other IMET objectives. One training manager said that development of human rights was an objective of IMET but not for the country program he managed, and another said the country program emphasizes professional education and leadership. Only 3 of the 12 training managers interviewed acknowledged that human rights was a country-level priority. One training manager said that human rights is a key objective reinforced by U.S. officials at post in partnership with the host nation. The remaining two training managers interviewed did not provide clear answers on how human rights was prioritized.

Of the six DOD combatant commands with geographic responsibilities, Southern Command—which has an area of responsibility that includes all of Latin America except for Mexico—placed particular importance on human rights with a policy dedicated to the issue. Although it does not mention IMET specifically, Southern Command’s human rights policy and procedures include language reinforcing the need for promoting and

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protecting human rights, and creating opportunities for better human rights understanding.

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## Program Monitoring and Evaluation Weaknesses Limit Agencies' Efforts to Assess IMET Effectiveness

State and DOD's ability to assess IMET's effectiveness is limited by several weaknesses in program monitoring and evaluation. First, State and DOD have not established a performance plan that includes IMET goals, objectives, and measures. Second, the agencies have limited information on most IMET graduates resulting from weaknesses in DOD's efforts to monitor and share information on these graduates after training. Third, the agencies' evaluation efforts include few of the elements commonly accepted as appropriate for measuring training programs, and do not measure how IMET contributes to long-term program outcomes. Finally, the agencies have not incorporated into their evaluation efforts existing practices—including those of State and DOD entities—and the input of IMET training managers.

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## State and DOD Have Not Established a Performance Plan for IMET

State's May 2011 program evaluation policy requires its bureaus to submit evaluation plans for all programs. However, State has not established a performance plan for the IMET program. According to State officials, IMET is referenced in State's fiscal year 2013 Bureau Strategic Resource Plans (BSRP), which are to contain the evaluation plans called for in this policy. Our review of 2013 State BSRPs<sup>16</sup> found little or no mention of IMET overall. However, the Political-Military Affairs BSRP notes that the bureau is to begin implementing a system for monitoring and evaluating security assistance programs, including IMET, which will continue over the next several years. According to State officials, this effort will begin in 2012, and the plan notes it will include a full-time position to coordinate the effort. Our prior work has noted the importance of developing program evaluation plans that include clear goals and performance measures, as well as intermediate measures to demonstrate performance linkages for programs, such as IMET, where outcomes may not be apparent for years. State officials stated the bureaus were

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<sup>16</sup>We reviewed the plans for the following bureaus, which had been identified by State officials as citing the IMET program: African Affairs, East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Europe and Eurasian Affairs, South and Central Asian Affairs, and Political-Military Affairs. According to State officials, the Near East Affairs and Western Hemisphere Affairs bureau plans did not include IMET.

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developing more detailed evaluation plans, but the bureaus had not completed these plans during the course of our review.

DOD also lacks a performance plan for IMET. DSCA's Strategic Plan 2009–2014, Campaign Support Plan 2010, and directorate-level performance plan do not include IMET performance measures or plans for evaluating the program.<sup>17</sup> A DSCA official stated that IMET is grouped together with all international education and training programs, and is not specified for performance planning purposes. A DSCA official stated IMET is not emphasized in current performance plans because it is an efficient and effective program, and is less of a priority for evaluation than newer programs. The Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy has established an office to conduct performance monitoring and evaluation. However, according to officials from the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, this monitoring and evaluation office will not address IMET.

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## DOD Monitors IMET Graduates to a Limited Extent

### DSCA Collects Career Information on Only a Few IMET Graduates

DSCA's database of IMET trainees provides limited information on these graduates' career progress or current position. We have identified program monitoring as a key element of agency internal control and quality control systems. Agencies should use such monitoring to assess program quality and performance over time. A key facet of IMET program monitoring is tracking basic career information to understand how IMET graduates are being utilized following training. U.S. law requires the Secretary of Defense to develop and maintain a database containing records on each IMET trainee, including the type of instruction received and whether it was successfully completed, and, to the extent practicable, a record of the trainee's subsequent military or defense ministry career and current position and location.<sup>18</sup> DSCA maintains IMET records in the Defense Security Assistance Management System, which includes

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<sup>17</sup>IMET falls under DSCA's Building Partnership Capacity Division, which, in addition to IMET, executes many of DOD's security cooperation programs.

<sup>18</sup>Sec 22 USC 2347g.

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IMET Monitoring Efforts Vary Across Posts, but Could Provide Valuable Information

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names of IMET trainees and other biographical information.<sup>19</sup> The database is updated with career information on IMET graduates who have attained a prominent rank or position within their host country military or civilian government—referred to as a position of prominence.<sup>20</sup> As of June 2011, DSCA data indicate that only 1 percent of the nearly 88,000 IMET trainees in the database—978 IMET graduates—had attained a position of prominence. Career information—such as on the extent to which IMET graduates are assigned to positions relevant to their training, remain employed by the host nation following training, and progress within their host nation military and civilian rank structure—is not systematically updated for the remaining IMET graduates who have not attained a position of prominence. A DSCA official acknowledged weaknesses exist in current efforts to monitor IMET graduates.

Survey responses from DOD training managers indicate that posts monitor IMET graduates to varying degrees.<sup>21</sup> For example, 35 of 59 training managers who responded to our survey indicated they maintain some career information on all or most IMET graduates, while 23 of 59 who responded said they do so for some, a few, or no graduates. Furthermore, though DOD guidance states SCOs must obtain appropriate assurances that IMET trainees are employed in the skill for which trained for a period of time to warrant the expense to the United States, 15 of 58 training managers who responded to our survey indicated they did not typically track whether IMET graduates are assigned to a position relevant to their IMET training.

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<sup>19</sup>Database information includes first and last name, sex, service or organization type, student code (e.g., officer, enlisted, or civilian), organization or unit, place of birth city and country, and date of birth.

<sup>20</sup>Each year SCOs are required to provide DSCA with a list of IMET graduates who have attained a position of prominence. The definition of position of prominence is to include general and flag rank officers and lesser ranks such as chief of a military service, senior cabinet aide, senior position on the joint or general staff, or commander of a training installation. Civilian graduates achieving positions of prominence are to include heads of state, cabinet and deputy cabinet ministers, ambassadors, members of parliament, chiefs of leading business enterprises, and other civilian leaders.

<sup>21</sup>We sent surveys to all 123 training managers worldwide and received 70 completed surveys, for a response rate of 57 percent. In this report we provide results from the officers responding to our survey questions and do not generalize the survey results to the entire population. The actual number of respondents for particular questions was typically less than 70, due to nonresponses or “do not know” responses.

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The survey responses also indicate in many cases training managers obtain valuable monitoring information that State and DOD are not fully utilizing. For example, of those 35 training managers who indicated that they maintain some career information on all or most IMET graduates, 24 said they do so for 3 years or longer following training, and 17 of these 24 said they do so for 6 years or longer. However, despite its potential value as part of a broader IMET evaluation effort, training managers do not systematically share this information with State and DOD, and are only required to share information on the small percentage of IMET graduates who have attained a position of prominence.

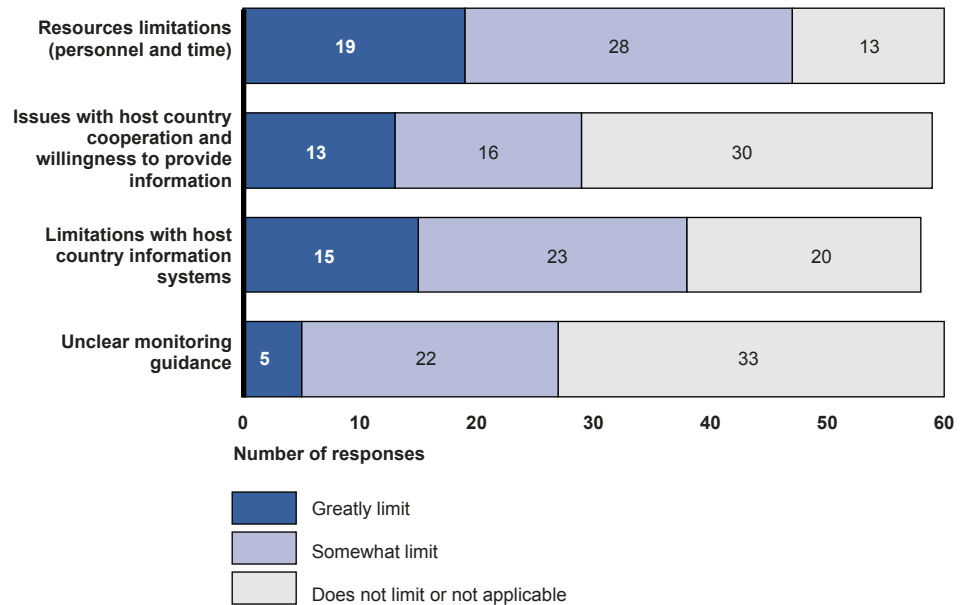
In addition to our survey, we also interviewed 20 training managers, and found monitoring weaknesses. In particular, 18 of the 20 training managers we interviewed monitored a limited number of IMET graduates. Six of these managers said they sought career information on graduates only when circumstances warranted, while a few stated that they were unable to conduct any monitoring of graduates. One training manager said that after a student returns from training, “I am done with him,” while another said, “we lose track of graduates as soon as they return” to their home country following training.

Our survey and interview results indicate that training managers generally place greater monitoring focus on graduates with more critical and higher level skills, in accordance with DOD guidance. For example, 35 of the 49 training managers who responded to our survey said that they collected and updated at least some career information for all or most IMET PME graduates. Further, 14 of the 20 training managers we interviewed said that they generally focused monitoring on graduates who attained a position of prominence or graduates of PME training. While this emphasis on higher-level graduates is consistent with DOD guidance, these graduates represent a limited portion of IMET trainees—in fiscal year 2010, PME students represented nearly 27 percent of all IMET participants.

### Training Managers Identified Challenges to Monitoring IMET Graduates but Provided Suggestions for Improvement

Training managers we surveyed and interviewed identified several challenges to their ability to monitor IMET graduates. As figure 5 shows, survey respondents—ranging from nearly one half to more than three-quarters of the respondents—indicated that their ability to collect and update career information on IMET graduates was somewhat or greatly hindered by resource limitations relating to personnel and time, issues with host country willingness and ability to provide information on graduates, and unclear guidance on the extent to which training managers should monitor IMET graduates.

**Figure 5: Survey Responses on Challenges to Monitoring IMET Graduates**



Source: GAO survey of training managers.

Note: We do not include missing responses in this figure.

These challenges were also highlighted during our interviews with 20 training managers. In particular, more than half of the 20 managers said they did not have enough time or personnel to monitor IMET graduates. In addition, more than half of the training managers stated that the host nation did not fully cooperate in providing information on IMET graduates. Several training managers said that requesting information from the host nation on IMET graduates would likely be perceived as a U.S. intelligence gathering effort or an effort to unduly influence trainees. Finally, a few training managers explained that they were unable to obtain information on IMET graduates in a timely manner due to various factors, including slow response times from host nation officials and inefficient host nation information management systems.

Training managers also offered suggestions for improving IMET monitoring, such as:

- clarify guidance to specify what information training managers should collect on IMET graduates, the desired outcomes, and best practices for doing so;



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- improve data systems so training managers and IMET graduates can enter updated career information more easily;
  - require recipient nations to provide updated information on IMET graduates as a precondition of IMET assistance; and
  - increase information sharing between military schools and SCOs regarding IMET graduates.

Multiple training managers also noted that developing strong working relationships with host nation counterparts and meeting with IMET graduates before and after training were important in helping their current efforts to monitor IMET graduates. For example, one training manager explained that her host nation counterparts provided timely information about the career changes of IMET graduates, and also hosted an annual reception for past years' IMET graduates to reinforce relationships established by the program.

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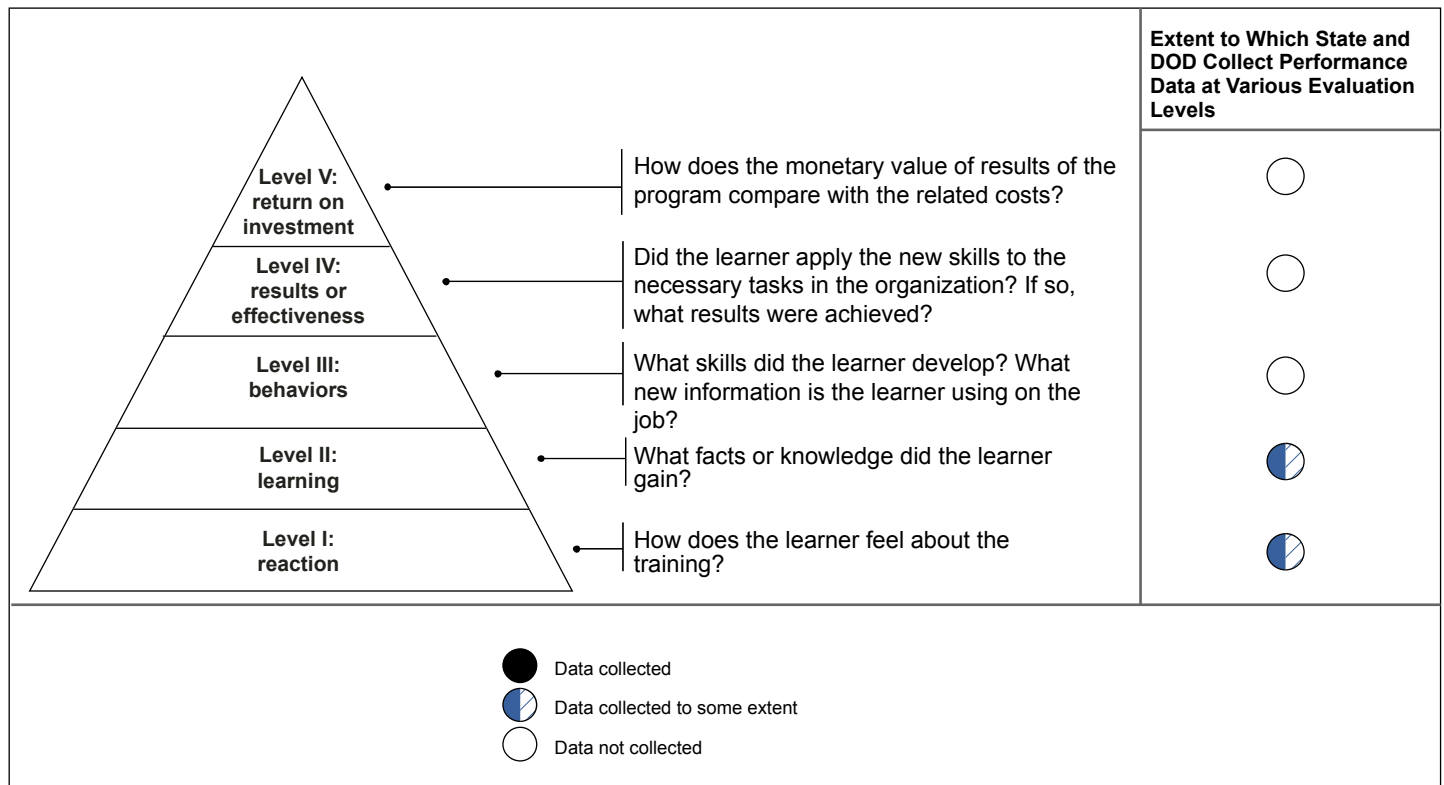
### State and DOD Evaluation Efforts Provide Limited Information on Program Effectiveness

State and DOD's current evaluation efforts include some of the elements for measuring progress of training programs, but do not objectively measure how IMET contributes to long-term, desired program outcomes. We have developed guidance to evaluate how training efforts contribute to the accomplishment of program goals and objectives.<sup>22</sup> This guidance notes that one commonly accepted approach to evaluating the impact of training over time consists of five levels of evaluation: reaction (level I), learning (level II), behavior (level III), results (level IV), and return on investment (level V) (see fig.6).

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<sup>22</sup>See, GAO, *Department of Homeland Security: Strategic Management of Training Important for Successful Transformation*, [GAO-05-888](#) (Washington, D.C.: Sep. 23, 2005), and *Human Capital: A Guide for Assessing Strategic Training and Development Efforts in the Federal Government*, [GAO-04-546G](#) (Washington, D.C. March 2004). There are four components to the training and development process: planning and front-level analysis, design and development, implementation, and evaluation. Our review of the IMET program focuses on the final component, evaluation, which enables agencies to demonstrate how training efforts contribute to improved performance and results.

**Figure 6: Extent to Which State and DOD Collect Performance Data at Evaluation Levels**



Sources: GAO analysis of State and DOD data, and GAO (presentation).

Note: Our presentation is based on information from Donald L. Kirkpatrick, *Evaluating Training Programs: The Four Levels* (San Francisco, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., 1998), and Jack J. Phillips, ed., *Implementing Evaluation Systems and Processes* (Alexandria, Va., American Society for Training and Development, 1998.)

The lower levels of evaluation—levels I and II—focus on more immediate training outputs, such as whether participants liked the training or how much they learned. The higher levels—levels III, IV, and V—measure longer-term program results by assessing how training is applied on the job and contributes to the accomplishment of program goals and objectives. As figure 6 illustrates, current State and DOD IMET evaluation efforts only partially address these five levels of evaluation. We recognize conducting higher levels of evaluation can be challenging and resource intensive. Agencies can consider feasibility, cost-effectiveness, and other factors when determining the appropriate extent to which to use the various evaluation levels to assess programs.

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State and DOD have three main sources of IMET performance information: a survey of some IMET graduates, a report on IMET graduates who have attained prominent ranks or positions, and country-level narrative performance information. While the survey collects some level I and level II performance evaluation information, none of these three sources captures higher-level performance information for the program worldwide, such as the extent to which IMET graduates apply program skills or knowledge on the job (level III) or contribute to organizational changes or results through the application of these skills or knowledge (level IV). For example:

- State and DOD’s survey of IMET students<sup>23</sup> collects some information on student’s reaction to and knowledge gained from IMET training, but little insight on how IMET affects trainees’ future behavior or program results. The survey includes questions that gauge students’ reaction to the training, such as whether it met expectations or was valuable. It also has questions on the extent to which students think they gained understanding of certain issues. However, the survey is administered only once, immediately after training, and is not accompanied by a pretest to compare knowledge levels before and after training. The survey also does not include a follow-up component to assess how students—a year later for instance—apply skills learned through IMET training on the job.
- DSCA’s annual report of IMET graduates who have attained “positions of prominence” reflects a small fraction of the overall IMET graduate population and does not assess graduates’ job performance relative to program objectives. This report identifies the placement of foreign officials with a U.S. military training background. For example, two heads of state and two deputy heads of state are among the IMET graduates who attained a position of prominence. However, as noted earlier, graduates who have attained a position of prominence represent only 1 percent of all IMET trainees in DSCA’s database. Therefore, this report does not address IMET’s impact on the overall student population. Further, though the report provides information on

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<sup>23</sup>The survey was developed in 2006, and in 2010 State and DOD published results. See, Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management and the Air Force Institute of Technology, *State Department and Defense Department Study on the Effectiveness of the IMET Program: 2007–2009* (Mar. 31, 2010). According to DSCA, officials from the Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management will provide a briefing on the results of surveys covering 2010–2011 in the fall of 2011.

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IMET graduates' title and training background, it does not include evaluative information, such as the extent to which these graduates apply IMET learning on the job.

- DOD collects narrative performance information in annual country training plans, but does not systematically analyze this information. Each year SCOs must include in their annual training plans—known as Combined Education and Training Program Plans—narrative performance information on country-level successes or failures related to the use of training efforts. For example, plans include narrative information on how effectively the host country uses the skills and training of returning graduates and how training has enhanced the professionalism or capabilities of the host nation. State and DOD could potentially analyze some of the narrative information to inform assessments of program impact, such as the extent to which graduates are applying IMET skills to shape organizational changes or results.

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### Other State and DOD Evaluation Practices Could be Applied to IMET

State's Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs engages youth, students, educators, artists, athletes, and rising leaders in many fields in the United States and more than 160 countries through academic, cultural, sports, and professional exchanges. The bureau conducts several types of evaluation efforts that could be applied to IMET, including surveying program participants prior to, immediately after, and a year after programs. According to the bureau, these surveys enable the bureau to collect baseline and end-of-program data, as well as follow-up information on how program participants apply their program experience to work behaviors and organizational processes. The bureau's Chief of Evaluation suggested that such a multi-phase survey approach could have applicability for evaluating IMET.

In addition, several of DOD's regional centers for security studies have begun efforts to evaluate long-term program outcomes.<sup>24</sup> In particular, the Africa Center for Strategic Studies and the Center for Hemispheric

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<sup>24</sup>The regional centers provide resident courses, seminars, and conferences to military and civilian personnel from allied and partner nations. The centers include The George C. Marshall Center European Center for Security Studies, the Asian Pacific Center for Security Studies, the Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies, the Africa Center for Strategic Studies, and the Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies.

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Defense Studies have developed performance indicators intended to measure program impact over time. Using these indicators, the centers can attempt to track the extent to which program alumni are engaging in certain activities that align with key program objectives. Examples of specific indicators the centers have developed include the number of program alumni who have contributed to regional center publications or host nation strategy documents, lectured on U.S. policy or security issues, or developed a new law or policy change within their host nation government.

In addition, SCO training managers suggested several performance indicators and activities that State and DOD could adopt to strengthen IMET evaluation efforts. These suggestions include:

- surveying U.S. military officials to determine if IMET has improved access and working relationships with the host nation, or proficiency in certain areas;
- assessing the career progression of IMET graduates compared to non-IMET graduates within specific countries;
- analyzing the proportion of positions of prominence held by IMET graduates, compared to non-IMET graduates;
- reviewing the extent to which IMET graduates are serving in positions that utilize training;
- conducting pre- and post-IMET tests to measure changes in attitudes before and after training; and
- assessing select countries' participation in joint operations.

The training managers we interviewed did not indicate they had tried to employ any of these suggestions to evaluate IMET.

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## Conclusions

Many IMET recipient countries could benefit from increased exposure to human rights standards and training, with nearly two-thirds of IMET recipients in fiscal year 2010 identified as “not free” or “partly free” by Freedom House. Though building respect for human rights is a program objective, IMET training managers and country training plans indicate a limited emphasis on human rights for those countries with known human rights and related concerns. For example, for those 29 IMET recipient

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countries ranked “not free,” only 11 training plans identified human rights or human rights-related concepts as a program objective. State and DOD could take steps to better target the provision of human rights training among such IMET recipient countries of concern.

Furthermore, State and DOD continue to have weaknesses in monitoring IMET graduates and assessing IMET program effectiveness.<sup>25</sup> Their current evaluation efforts do not measure how IMET training contributes to long-term program outcomes—such as the extent to which IMET graduates apply training skills or knowledge on the job, or contribute to organizational changes or results through the use of these skills. Moreover, current efforts to monitor the use and careers of IMET graduates address only a limited number of trainees, while the nature and extent of these efforts can vary across posts depending on host-country cooperation, available resources, and other factors. While we acknowledge it can be challenging to evaluate long-term training programs, State and DOD should take initial steps toward a long-term commitment to strengthen IMET evaluation efforts. To do so, the agencies could follow the established evaluation framework outlined in this report, which offers a roadmap for undertaking such efforts; adopt applicable evaluation practices used by other agencies; and draw on the institutional knowledge of their own staff to determine best approaches for improving monitoring and evaluation. To address concerns about resources, the agencies may consider monitoring graduates and evaluating program effectiveness for selected training types or in selected countries. Until the agencies develop a more comprehensive IMET program evaluation and monitoring system, they will be unable to objectively demonstrate the program’s effectiveness in building professionalism and respect for human rights within foreign military forces.

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## Recommendations for Executive Action

We recommend that the Secretaries of State and Defense take several steps to emphasize human rights training and improve evaluations for the IMET program.

Specifically, we recommend that the Secretaries of State and Defense take steps to ensure that human rights training is identified as a priority

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<sup>25</sup>[NSIAD-90-215BR](#).

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for those IMET recipient countries with known records of human rights concerns. These steps may include highlighting human rights and related concepts in country training plans.

We also recommend that they take initial steps toward developing a system for evaluating the effectiveness of the IMET program. These steps should build on current efforts toward a more systematic collection of performance information—at multiple points in time, over several years, and for a set of objective performance measures—and should include:

- adopting existing evaluation practices used by other State and DOD agencies, such as periodically surveying program participants to assess changes in knowledge or attitudes, and
- soliciting ideas from training managers and applying their suggestions on improving program monitoring practices and evaluations, including for the development of objective performance measures that could assess program impact over time.

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## Agency Comments and Our Evaluation

We provided a draft of this report to State and DOD for their review and comment. State provided written comments, which are reprinted in appendix III. State generally concurred with our recommendations and said it would work with DOD to address them. In particular, State stated it will work with DOD to ensure human rights training is identified as a priority in IMET recipient countries with known human rights concerns. State also stated it will work with DOD to determine steps that could be feasibly taken in order to better evaluate the effectiveness of the IMET program over time, starting with discussions with other State and DOD offices using relevant evaluation practices, but also by soliciting ideas from training managers.

DOD provided written comments, which are reprinted in appendix IV. DOD concurred with both of our recommendations. DOD stated it will work with State to inform training managers in those countries that State believes should have human rights specifically listed as an important objective in the country's annual training plan. DOD stated the inclusion of human rights objectives in country training plans will ensure a better policy focus on appropriate education and training courses for human rights. DOD acknowledged that it and State have weaknesses in their ability to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the IMET program. DOD stated it will work with State to review metrics and evaluation processes within other DOD and State agencies and identify best

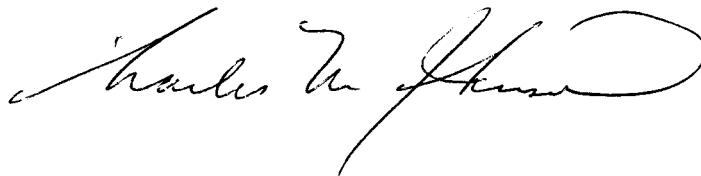
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practices to more systematically collect IMET performance data. In addition, DOD stated it would solicit ideas from the IMET training managers and consider their suggestions on improving program monitoring practices and evaluation, to include identifying performance measures that could assess the IMET program's impact over time. DOD also provided technical comments, which we have included throughout this report as appropriate.

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We are sending copies of this report to interested congressional committees and the Secretaries of State and Defense. This report will also be available at no charge on the GAO website at <http://www.gao.gov>.

If you or your staff have any questions about this report, please contact me at (202) 512-7331 or [johnsoncm@gao.gov](mailto:johnsoncm@gao.gov). Key contributors to this report are listed in appendix IV. Contact points for our Offices of Congressional Relations and Public Affairs may be found on the last page of this report.



Charles Michael Johnson, Jr.  
Director  
International Affairs and Trade



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# Appendix I: Scope and Methodology

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To review changes in the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program from fiscal years 2000 to 2010, we analyzed Department of State and Defense (DOD) documents and data systems related to IMET funding allocations by country and region and number of students trained by training type. These included Department of State's (State) Congressional Budget Justifications, the annual Congressional Report on Military International Training, and the Defense Security Cooperation Agency's (DSCA) Defense Security Assistance Management System. We used fiscal year 2000 as our starting point because, according to DSCA, their data were unreliable prior to that year. We discussed and clarified the reliability of data included in the system with DSCA officials responsible for managing its data and we determined these data to be sufficiently reliable for the purposes of our review.

To review the provision and prioritization of human rights training for IMET students, we obtained curriculum documents, course descriptions, and student enrollment information from select DOD training facilities. In addition, we analyzed Combined Education and Training Program Plans, which outline training priorities and objectives, for IMET recipient nations ranked as "not free" by Freedom House in its report titled *Freedom in the World 2011*. We used the Freedom House index as a proxy for human rights rankings. State has used Freedom House rankings as an indicator to measure progress toward the agency's strategic goal: "Governing Justly and Democratically." This goal includes advancing respect for human rights. We assessed the emphasis on human rights in these training plans using human rights related terminology from the Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management's handbook, *The Management of Security Assistance*. Two analysts separately reviewed the training plans for human rights and related terminology, and then met and reconciled their results.

To review the extent to which State and DOD have monitored and evaluated the IMET program, we reviewed U.S. laws related to the IMET program. We also reviewed our prior reports addressing the evaluation of training programs, State and DOD-funded evaluations of IMET, and other IMET studies. We met with State and DOD staff to discuss their performance planning, monitoring, and evaluation efforts. These staff included officials from multiple State bureaus and DOD entities, including the DSCA; geographic combatant commands; and several military departments and U.S. military schools. To understand the extent to which State and DOD had developed performance plans for IMET, we reviewed State's program evaluation policy; State's Bureau Strategic Resource Plans for the African Affairs, East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Europe and

Eurasian Affairs, South and Central Asian Affairs, and Political-Military Affairs bureaus; and DSCA's Strategic Plan 2009–2014 and Campaign Support Plan 2010. To understand the extent to which DOD monitors IMET graduates, we met with DSCA staff to discuss and review their centralized student data system. To review the extent to which State and DOD evaluate the effectiveness of the IMET program, we determined the primary methods by which the agencies provide IMET performance information. We then compared these existing IMET evaluation efforts against preexisting models for evaluating training programs, which we have identified as commonly accepted. Finally, we met with staff from State's Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs and staff from several DOD regional centers to assess the extent to which their program evaluation approaches could have applicability for IMET.

In addition, to obtain information on the provision and prioritization of human rights training for IMET students and the extent to which State and DOD monitor IMET graduates and evaluate program effectiveness, we conducted structured interviews with Security Cooperation Office (SCO) training managers in 20 IMET countries. We selected these 20 countries using a methodology that prioritized those countries with higher funding levels, and included a range of host country conditions as ranked by Freedom House's Freedom in the World Index 2010. We conducted interviews both in person, during our attendance at the Security Cooperation Education and Training Working Group conferences for the U.S. European Command and the U.S. Africa Command, as well as by phone. Our structured interview included questions on managers' specific monitoring activities, the types and levels of IMET graduates they monitor, their IMET evaluation activities, and their offices' human rights policies and activities. We developed the structured interview over multiple iterations in which we assessed questions methodologically for coherence, completeness, and balance, and reviewed our questions with two training managers not included in our selection of 20 for structured interviews and refined our questions based on their input.

To analyze the open-ended responses to our structured interview questions, we first developed a set of summary statements to be used for reporting purposes. These summary statements were based on an inductive exercise involving an in-depth reading and comparison of responses. Second, we tested these statements on an initial set of three interviews. This test involved two analysts separately coding the summary statements for each of the three interviews. Most statements were coded in one of four ways: (1) positive response—the interview data corresponded to the statement; (2) negative response—the interview data

contradicted the statement; (3) mixed response—the interview data partially corresponded to the statement; and (4) nonresponse—no reference to the statement was contained in the interview data. The two analysts met and reconciled their responses; this effort also resulted in modifications to the summary statements. Third, a primary analyst used the revised statements to separately code each of the remaining 17 interviews and then a secondary analyst reviewed that coding; any differences in coding were reconciled between the two analysts. Final tallies of the analysis were obtained by counting, for each statement, the number of positive, negative, and nonresponses.

To obtain further information on how and to what degree SCOs monitor IMET training graduates we conducted a short e-mail survey of the lead training manager in 123 IMET countries in July and August 2011, receiving 70 responses. Due to our response rate of 57 percent, in this report we provide counts of the numbers of officers responding to particular survey questions and do not generalize the survey results to the entire population of officers as we do not know how the other 43 percent of officers would have responded to our questions. In addition, the actual number of respondents to particular questions is typically less than 70, due to item nonresponse or do not know responses. We pretested our survey with IMET training officers in three countries. In collecting and analyzing the survey data, we took steps to minimize errors that might occur during these stages. To assess the likelihood of bias resulting from differences in respondents and non-respondents, we analyzed the variation in the percentages of respondents and non-respondents by region and funding level, which are two key attributes of SCOs. We found that there was not a large variation between the percentages of non-respondents and respondents by these two variables, supporting our conclusion regarding the usability of the data.

We conducted this performance audit from June 2010 through October 2011 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

# Appendix II: Freedom House Rankings for Fiscal Year 2010 IMET Recipient Countries

This appendix provides information on fiscal year 2010 IMET funding and Freedom House rankings for the 125 IMET recipient countries. As shown in table 2, 46 were ranked by Freedom House as “free,” 48 as “partly free,” and 31 as “not free.” Freedom House defines these terms as follows:

- A “free” country is one where there is open political competition, a climate of respect for civil liberties, significant independent civic life, and independent media.
- A “partly free” country is one where there is limited respect for political rights and civil liberties. “Partly free” states frequently suffer from an environment of corruption, weak rule of law, ethnic and religious strife, and a political landscape in which a single party enjoys dominance despite a certain degree of pluralism.
- A “not free” country is one where basic political rights are absent, and basic civil liberties are widely and systematically denied.

**Table 2: IMET Recipient Countries by Fiscal Year 2010 Funding Level and 2011 Freedom House Ranking**

Region or country	Freedom House 2011 ranking	Fiscal year 2010 allocations
<b>Africa</b>		\$15,130,000
Angola	Not free	373,000
Benin	Free	316,000
Botswana	Free	688,000
Burkina Faso	Partly free	261,000
Burundi	Partly free	345,000
Cameroon	Not free	267,000
Cape Verde	Free	124,000
Central African Republic	Partly free	60,000
Chad	Not free	375,000
Comoros	Partly free	111,000
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Not free	500,000
Djibouti	Not free	379,000
Ethiopia	Not free	336,000
Gabon	Not free	200,000
Ghana	Free	794,000
Kenya	Partly free	959,000

**Appendix II: Freedom House Rankings for  
Fiscal Year 2010 IMET Recipient Countries**

<b>Region or country</b>	<b>Freedom House 2011 ranking</b>	<b>Fiscal year 2010 allocations</b>
Lesotho	Partly free	\$177,000
Liberia	Partly free	488,000
Malawi	Partly free	300,000
Mali	Free	411,000
Mauritania	Not free	147,000
Mauritius	Free	150,000
Mozambique	Partly free	385,000
Namibia	Free	140,000
Nigeria	Partly free	1,016,000
Republic of the Congo	Not free	132,000
Rwanda	Not free	512,000
Sao Tome and Principe	Free	171,000
Senegal	Partly free	991,000
Seychelles	Partly free	118,000
Sierra Leone	Partly free	403,000
South Africa	Free	845,000
Sudan	Not free	793,000
Swaziland	Not free	167,000
Tanzania	Partly free	397,000
The Gambia	Partly free	118,000
Togo	Partly free	224,000
Uganda	Partly free	591,000
Zambia	Partly free	366,000
<b>East Asia and Pacific</b>		<b>8,878,000</b>
Cambodia	Not free	99,000
East Asia and Pacific Regional	n/a	739,000
Indonesia	Free	1,819,000
Laos	Not free	71,000
Malaysia	Partly free	950,000
Marshall Islands	Free	34,000
Mongolia	Free	1,006,000
Philippines	Partly free	1,850,000
Samoa	Free	36,000
Thailand	Partly free	1,571,000
Timor-Leste	Partly free	303,000
Vietnam	Not free	400,000

**Appendix II: Freedom House Rankings for  
Fiscal Year 2010 IMET Recipient Countries**

<b>Region or country</b>	<b>Freedom House 2011 ranking</b>	<b>Fiscal year 2010 allocations</b>
<b>Europe and Eurasia</b>		\$30,532,000
Albania	Partly free	962,000
Armenia	Partly free	449,000
Azerbaijan	Not free	886,000
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Partly free	990,000
Bulgaria	Free	1,719,000
Croatia	Free	864,000
Czech Republic	Free	1,892,000
Estonia	Free	1,156,000
Georgia	Partly free	1,806,000
Greece	Free	105,000
Hungary	Free	1,060,000
Kosovo	Partly free	700,000
Latvia	Free	1,100,000
Lithuania	Free	1,100,000
Macedonia	Partly free	955,000
Malta	Free	149,000
Moldova	Partly free	731,000
Montenegro	Free	398,000
Poland	Free	2,198,000
Portugal	Free	95,000
Romania	Free	1,760,000
Serbia	Free	903,000
Slovakia	Free	964,000
Slovenia	Free	694,000
Turkey	Partly free	4,992,000
Ukraine	Partly free	1,904,000
<b>Near East</b>		18,520,000
Algeria	Not free	950,000
Bahrain	Not free	671,000
Egypt	Not free	1,900,000
Iraq	Not free	1,989,000
Jordan	Not free	3,772,000
Lebanon	Partly free	2,500,000
Libya	Not free	319,000
Morocco	Partly free	1,789,000

**Appendix II: Freedom House Rankings for  
Fiscal Year 2010 IMET Recipient Countries**

<b>Region or country</b>	<b>Freedom House 2011 ranking</b>	<b>Fiscal year 2010 allocations</b>
Oman	Not free	\$1,525,000
Saudi Arabia	Not free	7,000
Tunisia	Not free	1,945,000
Yemen	Not free	1,153,000
<b>South and Central Asia</b>		<b>13,404,000</b>
Afghanistan	Not free	1,756,000
Bangladesh	Partly free	1,009,000
India	Free	1,269,000
Kazakhstan	Not free	779,000
Kyrgyz Republic	Partly free	843,000
Maldives	Partly free	203,000
Nepal	Partly free	896,000
Pakistan	Partly free	5,000,000
Sri Lanka	Partly free	731,000
Tajikistan	Not free	456,000
Turkmenistan	Not free	262,000
Uzbekistan	Not free	200,000
<b>Western Hemisphere</b>		<b>16,315,000</b>
Argentina	Free	900,000
Bahamas	Free	200,000
Belize	Free	258,000
Bolivia	Partly free	366,000
Brazil	Free	610,000
Chile	Free	899,000
Colombia	Partly free	1,694,000
Costa Rica	Free	366,000
Dominican Republic	Free	844,000
Eastern Caribbean and Barbados	Free	\$783,000
Ecuador	Partly free	375,000
El Salvador	Free	1,708,000
Guatemala	Partly free	797,000
Guyana	Free	300,000
Haiti	Partly free	92,000
Honduras	Partly free	777,000
Jamaica	Free	752,000
Mexico	Partly free	989,000

**Appendix II: Freedom House Rankings for  
Fiscal Year 2010 IMET Recipient Countries**

<b>Region or country</b>	<b>Freedom House 2011 ranking</b>	<b>Fiscal year 2010 allocations</b>
Nicaragua	Partly free	\$894,000
Panama	Free	750,000
Paraguay	Partly free	394,000
Peru	Free	627,000
Suriname	Free	250,000
Trinidad and Tobago	Free	167,000
Uruguay	Free	523,000
<b>Administrative costs</b>		5,221,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$108,000,000</b>

Sources: GAO analysis of State funding data and Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2011.



# Appendix III: Comments from the Department of State



United States Department of State

Chief Financial Officer

Washington, D.C. 20520

OCT 18 2011

Ms. Jacquelyn Williams-Bridgers  
Managing Director  
International Affairs and Trade  
Government Accountability Office  
441 G Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20548-0001

Dear Ms. Williams-Bridgers:

We appreciate the opportunity to review your draft report, "INTERNATIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING: Agencies Should Emphasize Human Rights Training and Improve Evaluations," GAO Job Code 320776.

The enclosed Department of State comments are provided for incorporation with this letter as an appendix to the final report.

If you have any questions concerning this response, please contact Brendan Garvin, Program Analyst, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs at (202) 647-7769.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James L. Millette".

James L. Millette

cc: GAO – Charles M. Johnson, Jr.  
PM – Andrew J. Shapiro  
State/OIG – Evelyn Klemstine

**Department of State Comments on GAO Draft Report  
INTERNATIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING: Agencies  
Should Emphasize Human Rights Training and Improve Evaluations  
(GAO-12-123, GAO Code 320776)**

The Department of State appreciates the opportunity to comment on this report, as well as Congress' continued interest in the International Military Education and Training (IMET) Program and GAO efforts to review the program to ensure that it is meeting congressional intent.

As the GAO identifies, the IMET program serves several important goals including encouraging effective and mutually beneficial relations and increased understanding between the United States and foreign countries in furtherance of the goals of international peace and security; improving the ability of participating foreign countries to utilize their resources, including defense articles and defense services obtained from the United States with maximum effectiveness, thereby contributing to greater self-reliance; and increasing the awareness of foreign nationals participating in such activities of basic issues involving internationally recognized human rights.

The Department of State is committed to ensuring that the program continues to meet all of these important goals.

In terms of instruction in human rights, the Department of State must balance between E-IMET type courses (which focus more exclusively on human rights, civil-military relations, and military justice) and defense resource management and professional military education (PME) courses (which generally include elements of these topics along with the standard education that would be received by any U.S. attendee at a given military institution). This calculation must take into account that in PME courses, which are often the same courses U.S. personnel are taking, foreign students are more likely to be exposed to a diverse group of U.S. attendees than they would be in a course focused specifically on E-IMET topics. Courses focused on E-IMET topics and PME courses both play a critical role in inculcating our most important values over the long run. There may be cases where the Department of State would choose to limit a country to E-IMET courses because of policy concerns.

It is for this reason that much of the funding in the IMET program is focused on PME, which, in addition to classroom instruction in E-IMET topics, also includes interactions with organizations in the United States like our local governments,

2

educational institutions, and civic organizations. The Department of State must also ensure that the IMET program for a given country is appropriately scoped so that the courses in a given program will garner high quality candidates from foreign nations and our investment in these students will not be squandered. Highly sought-after PME courses are key in ensuring that we can attract qualified individuals destined for future leadership positions and are a critical piece of imparting our values.

The Department of State appreciates the GAO's recommendations for improving the IMET program and generally concurs with the recommendations suggested.

We will work with the Department of Defense to ensure that human rights training is identified as a priority in IMET recipient countries with known human rights concerns. This training will include courses focused primarily on E-IMET topics, as well as longer-term PME courses that include instruction on E-IMET topics.

We will also work with the Department of Defense to determine steps that could be feasibly taken in order to better evaluate the effectiveness of the IMET program over time, starting with discussions with other of State and Department of Defense offices currently using relevant evaluation practices, but also by soliciting ideas from training managers. Follow-on steps taken in this areas will depend on a cost/benefit analysis of the options and will have to be scoped based on the availability of resources to implement new procedures and evaluation measures.

The Department of State is committed to working with the Department of Defense and Congress to ensure that the IMET program remains strong, and continues to build long-term relationships and impart American values, endeavors sometimes difficult to quantify, but critical to undertake.

# Appendix IV: Comments from the Department of Defense



DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY  
201 12TH STREET SOUTH, STE 203  
ARLINGTON, VA 22202-5408

OCT 20 2011

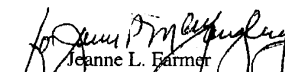
Mr. Charles Michael Johnson, Jr.,  
Director, International Affairs and Trade, U.S. Government  
Accountability Office  
441 G Street, NW, Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Johnson,

Thank you for the opportunity to review and provide comments on the GAO Draft Report, GAO-12-123, "INTERNATIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING: Agencies Should Emphasize Human Rights Training and Improve Evaluations," dated September 26, 2011 (GAO Code 320776)." The Department of Defense (DoD) response is attached.

I trust your assessment and recommendations will help DoD and DoS work closely with the COCOMs to ensure that human rights training is identified as a priority for those IMET recipient countries with known records of human rights concerns and also helps improve the assessment processes and evaluation standards for the IMET program.

Sincerely,

  
Jeanne L. Farmer  
Principal Director, for Programs

Attachments:  
As stated



GAO DRAFT REPORT DATED SEPTEMBER 26, 2011  
GAO-12-123 (GAO CODE 320776)

**“INTERNATIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING:  
AGENCIES SHOULD EMPHASIZE HUMAN RIGHTS TRAINING AND  
IMPROVE EVALUATIONS”**

**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE COMMENTS  
TO THE GAO RECOMMENDATIONS**

**RECOMMENDATION 1:** The GAO recommends that the Secretary of Defense take steps to ensure that human rights training is identified as a priority for those International Military Education and Training recipient countries with known records of human rights concerns. These steps may include highlighting human rights and related concepts in country training plans.

**DoD RESPONSE:** DoD concurs.

DoD agrees with DoS that there must be a balance between Expanded IMET (E-IMET) type courses that would focus more exclusively on human rights, and with professional military education courses which more broadly include elements of those topics, along with the standard education that would be received by any U.S. military or DoD civilian attendee at a DoD school as is noted on page 13 of the GAO report. Currently many of the senior professional military education (PME) courses at the war colleges and staff colleges provide at least a three week orientation for the international students where the E-IMET objectives of Human Rights, Civilian Control and the Role of the Military in a Democracy, Military Justice and the Laws of War are addressed. DoDs policies are also currently guided largely by an effort to embed human rights training in the Field Studies Program, which is available to all students attending courses in the US. The DoS survey, given to a large majority of IMET student who attend DoD courses in the U.S., reflects that students develop a greater understanding of human rights at the end of their courses in the U.S. To build upon the success of the current methods, DoD will work with DoS to inform the U.S. country teams and the Combatant Command Training Managers of those countries, where State believes that Human Rights should be specifically listed as an important objective in the country's Combined Education and Training Program Plan (CETPP). The inclusion of human rights objectives in the country's CETPP will ensure a better policy focus on appropriate education and training courses for human rights.

**RECOMMENDATION 2:** The GAO recommends that the Secretary of Defense take the first steps toward developing a system for evaluating the effectiveness of the International Military Education and Training program. These steps should build on current efforts toward a more systemic collection of performance information and should include: adopting existing evaluation practices used by other agencies, such as

periodically surveying program participants to assess changes in knowledge or attitudes; and soliciting ideas from training managers and applying their suggestions on improving program monitoring practices and evaluations, including for the development of objective performance measures that could assess program impact over time.

**DoD RESPONSE:** DoD concurs.

As the GAO identified in their report, DoS and DOD do have weaknesses in their ability to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program. While DoD does have policies and a data collection system in place, DSCA will work with DoS to look at metrics and evaluation processes within other DoD and DoS agencies and identify best practices to enhance the current system and enforce a more systematic way to collect performance data for the IMET program. We will also solicit ideas from the IMET program country training managers and consider their suggestions on improving program monitoring practices and evaluation, to include identifying performance measures that could assess the IMET programs' impact over time.

The GAO also identified that a large majority of the IMET funding over the last ten years has been allocated to Europe and the Eurasia region. DSCA and DoS believe that the IMET program has been instrumentally effective as a catalyst for a large majority of those European and Eurasia countries to participate and supporting the U.S. in Afghanistan, Iraq and in other Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Assistance efforts all over the world. DoD is committed to ensuring that the IMET program remains a key program in exposing international military students from allied and partner nations to American culture and values.

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# Appendix IV: GAO Contact and Staff Acknowledgments

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## GAO Contact

Charles Michael Johnson, Jr., (202) 512-7331 or [johnsoncm@gao.gov](mailto:johnsoncm@gao.gov)

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## Staff Acknowledgments

In addition to the contact named above, Joe Christoff, Director; Judith McCloskey, Assistant Director; Jennifer Bryant; Joe Carney; Debbie Chung; David Dornisch; Tim Fairbanks; Farhanaz Kermalli; Mary Moutsos; and Jena Sinkfield made key contributions to this report.

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