



## **World Terrorism Experts Gather at St Andrews - 14 Jun 2002**

The World's leading experts on Terrorism gathered at St Andrews last week (7th – 8th June) to take part in a major international two- day conference organised by the University of St Andrews.

Among the important figures at the 3rd Annual International Conference, organised by the University's Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence (CSTPV), were Giandomenico Picco, Undersecretary- General of the United Nations; former Swedish Prime Minister Carl Bildt; John W. Scanlon, Director of the New York State Office for Public Security; and Dr Michael Pillsbury, of the Policy Advisory Group of the Office of the US Secretary of Defence.

The invitation-only Conference, entitled 'Islamic Extremism and Terrorism in the Greater Middle East', was organised by Deputy Director of the CSTPV, Dr Magnus Ranstorp, and was attended by almost 100 delegates of international standing. In light of the events of September 11th and the ensuing aftermath, the attendance at the conference was three-fold from previous year's figures.

Dr Ranstorp was delighted to have attracted the World's foremost authorities on terrorism, the Al- Qaeda network and radical Islamic movements from the academic, diplomatic and law-enforcement communities.

'The Conference is a unique forum to learn from both academics and the wider policy-making community, exchange views and analysis on the changing terrorist phenomenon, and the critical challenges and prospects ahead in effectively countering both the 'old' and 'new' forms of terrorism,' said Dr Ranstorp.

Keynote speaker was Dr Bruce Hoffman, a founding Director of CSTPV, and currently Vice- President of External Affairs and Director of RAND Corporation's Washington DC office. Dr Hoffman's address was on 'Rethinking Terrorism and Counterterrorism Post 9/11'.

Among the lectures given were: 'Profiling the Suicide Bomber', 'The Problem of Responding to Terrorism' and 'The Media: A Critical First Responder to WMD Terrorism'.

Representatives from the World's largest media corporation, CNN, were so impressed by the content and significance of the conference, they later fed live broadcasts from the University over a nine hour period, an event unsurpassed in the University's history, and probably a significant event even by CNN's standards.

CNN's hourly reports highlighted in particular the discussions of the likelihood of the use of radiological devices in future terrorist acts. They were impressed by the timely and remarkable significance of these discussions, as just days later (on Monday 10th June), the US Government officially released details of the foiled 'dirty bomb' plot.

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