

IFSH, Hamburg University

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The Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy is an independent research institution at the University of Hamburg. The two terms in the institute's name highlight the central hypothesis underlying its work: Ensuring peace and providing security are two sides of the same coin. They cannot be pursued in isolation from each other. This is equally true of the situation - now receding into history - in which Europe knew peace under nuclear deterrence as it is of the contemporary situation, in which threats to peace security emanate in regional armed conflicts, transnational terrorism, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The work of the institute is thus underpinned by the postulate of a peace and security policy that is both effective and geared to the use of peaceful means. The institute's current research programme, under the banner "Civilising conflict - preventing violence and consolidating peace by civilian means", gives concrete form to this approach. The IFSH's research profile demonstrates an awareness of political realities, a focus on problem solving, and an international mix of staff and project partners.

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The IFSH was established as a civil-law foundation in 1971 following a recommendation of the German Science Council ("Wissenschaftsrat") to promote peace-related research. The foundation is funded by the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg. There are three main types of activity performed under the aegis of the IFSH. The principle focus of the institute's work remains research, but teaching and consulting are growing in importance. With the launch in autumn 2002 of the international postgraduate degree course "Master of Peace and Security Studies" and the simultaneous start of a new funding programme for PhD students, the teaching duties of the institute's staff have increased significantly. The institute provides governments, parliaments, international organisations and other key political actors with services based on its academic knowledge, policy expertise and regional know-how. Around 50 people are employed at the IFSH.

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