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## STRATEGIC FORUM RELEASED:

### Reforming the Inter-American Defense Board

By John A. Cope

Washington, D.C. – The Institute for National Strategic Studies of the National Defense University is pleased to announce that a Strategic Forum on the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB) written by John A. Cope has been released in English and Spanish.

English: [http://www.ndu.edu/inss/docUploaded/SF%20258\\_Cope%20.pdf](http://www.ndu.edu/inss/docUploaded/SF%20258_Cope%20.pdf)

Spanish: <http://www.ndu.edu/inss/index.cfm?secID=85&pageID=8&type=section>

This paper analyzes the Inter-American Defense Board, one of the oldest international aggregations of armed forces in the world, and argues for IADB delegations shifting their roles from representing the armed forces, as is the case in the Americas today, to being responsible to ministers of defense or their equivalents. The scope of strategic concerns is broader in 2010 than in 1942, and the recommended reforms by Col. Cope would “reinforce the civil sector” in its oversight of the armed forces better than the current arrangement.

Hampered by its own limitations, the Organization of American States faces the “daunting task of becoming a more effective and influential multilateral forum” despite the fact that ideological and geo-strategic fissures among member states exist. Quoting Mancur Olson’s notion of “adapt or die”, Cope reminds us that “rigid institutions inevitably fail.”

Colonel John A. Cope, USA (Ret.), is a Senior Research Fellow in the Center for Strategic Research in the Institute for National Strategic Studies. He is a specialist in Western Hemisphere defense and security affairs, U.S. policy for Latin America and the Caribbean, civil-military relations, and defense education. Recent policy research and analysis has focused on security cooperation in the Caribbean Basin, including Mexico, as an integral part of U.S. homeland defense, U.S. policy toward Colombia, and the Defense Department’s engagement with Brazil and Chile.

The National Defense University is the nation’s premier center for joint professional military education. The university is an accredited graduate-level institution that provides an educational and research environment to prepare future leaders of the armed forces and other civilian agencies for high-level policy, command, and staff responsibilities.

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