

This message was sent on behalf of the H-PAD (Historians for Peace) Steering Committee.

General Petraeus to Give Keynote Address at SHAFR (Society of Historians of Foreign Relations) Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, June 21-23.

Member Protest Continues!

The professional organization of historians, who study American foreign relations has invited General David Petraeus to be their keynote luncheon speaker on Friday, June 22.

While SHAFR has long had an admirable record of recognizing diverse points of view in its Roundtables and Panels, the selection of a Keynote speaker –who is honored and paid- is in a different category. Furthermore, in the case of General Petraeus the organization is not permitting questions from the floor and has reserved the right to pre-screen any written questions in advance.

Protesting these appalling developments, on May 26 a group of concerned historians, wrote an open letter to the SHAFR Council, signed by 277 historians, of whom 141 were members of the organization. While taking seriously the necessity for free speech and presentation of diverse perspectives within the organization, they point out the difference between “engaging current and former policymakers and elevating their positions with the special honor of a keynote lecture.” They also cite the specific record of General Petraeus in contributing to the suffering and chaos in both Iraq and Afghanistan, which continues to the present.

[Read text of letter and signatories here](#) .

[Visit the SHAFR website for updates](#) .

To this point, SHAFR leadership has been unresponsive to their concerns. Despite requests for a more balanced event, the procedures for the post-lecture discussion have been made more rigid.