

Annual Review

THE NEAR EAST SOUTH ASIA
CENTER FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES

20
19



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About the NESA Center

Established in 2000 when the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) recognized the need for an organization dedicated to the challenging region extending from North Africa across the Arabian Peninsula and into South Asia, the NESA Center today is the preeminent DOD institution for building relationships with and understanding the NESA region. Based at the U.S. National Defense University (NDU), the NESA Center conducts programs and Track II diplomacy forums providing critical spaces for U.S. and NESA region policymakers to address key security and defense issues of regional and global importance. The NESA Center supports the theater security cooperation efforts of the U.S. combatant commands, U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM), U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM), U.S. European Command (USEUCOM), and U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (USPACOM), and is one of five regional centers under the Defense Security Cooperation Agency

NESA in 2019

In FY19, the NESA Center expanded its global alumni network to include nearly 10,000 alumni from 128 countries spanning the NESA region and beyond, growing by almost 950 new alumni. The Center's regular activities and specialized programming provide the DoD and other U.S. government stakeholders valuable and unique insights into the thinking of government officials, civil society, and "informed outsiders" across the critical NESA region. With all of the shared challenges facing the U.S. and NESA region, the NESA Center has a special part to play, and we are grateful for the confidence our partners, stakeholders, and participants show in us. Continue reading for a snapshot into the NESA Center's diversified and impactful FY19 programming.



Director's Message



The NESAC Center is thankful for the support given by in-region partners, U.S. Government stakeholders, alumni, U.S. embassies, and U.S. allies for providing invaluable assistance for the continuity of NESAC programs. With their efforts, foreign policy communities around the world are better equipped to provide answers and analysis towards tough security challenges impacting our world.

This year the NESAC Center was successful in completing nearly 30 resident programs with participants from 128 countries resulting in over 940 new alumni—with the addition of numerous topical seminars and meetings—and the engagement of nearly 10,000 participants. The NESAC Center has the unique ability to use the collaborative interests and knowledge of regional Combatant Commands and U.S. military organizations including U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM), U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM), U.S. Army Central (ARCENT), and the Joint Staff, in order to render a specialized set of 22 programs, that address specific regionally sensitive security and defense issues.

Beyond the NESAC Center's specialized regional and topical courses, the Executive and Senior Executive Seminars employ broad multi-lateral engagement to provide the most collaborative space for policymakers to hash out security strategy and cultivate relationships. Through the NESAC Center's whole-of-society approach, alumni are prepared to develop policy recommendations within their governments, non-governmental agencies, think-tanks, and communities, consistent with mutual goals and objectives.

"In FY19 the NESAC Center successfully completed nearly 30 resident programs with participants from 128 countries, resulting in over 940 new alumni and the engagement of nearly 10,000 participants"

The NESAC Center's unique ability to navigate through unofficial channels and conduct Track II strategic dialogues makes it an excellent resource for international policymakers to provide and present analysis. NESAC programs in coordination with the University of California at Los Angeles, the University of Ottawa, the Middle East Institute, and the International Institute for Strategic Studies cover strategic international challenges such as the Arab-Israeli Peace Discussions, the U.S.-Iran Nuclear Dialogue, South Asian Regional Security, Middle East-North Africa Security, the India-Pakistan Nuclear Settlement, and the India-Pakistan Military to Military Relationship.

The NESAC Center is proud to work with U.S. Central Command, U.S. Africa Command, in-region partners, as well as our expansive alumni network, to catalyze whole-of –government approaches addressing key issues like returning jihadi fighters, countering violent extremism, border security, and critical socio-political and humanitarian situations in the NESAC region. The NESAC Center's unique programs and Track II diplomacy forums provide a crucial and much-needed collaborative space for U.S. and NESAC policymakers to engage, while NESAC's 'Future Leaders' seminars cultivate ideas from rising change makers and allow them to present solutions to complex topics to U.S. policymakers. Throughout FY19, NESAC program participants presented to NDU senior leaders, the State Department's Office for Countering Violent Extremism, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for the Middle East, as well as members of Congress and staff within the Committees on Foreign Relations, Homeland Security, and Intelligence for the U.S. Senate.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Terry Wolff".

LTG (Ret.) Terry Wolff
Director

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FLAGSHIP PROGRAMS

Highlights from NESA's specialized set of 22 annual programs

NESA Combating Terrorism Senior Executive Seminar “After ISIS”

From 10-21 June, the NESA Center hosted the Combating Terrorism Senior Executive Seminar (CT-SES) “After ISIS: Major Regional and Non-Regional Actors’ Approaches to Countering Violent Extremism” at the NESA facilities at the National Defense University. The CT-SES is a flagship NESA program designed for senior professionals active in the foreign and defense policy space across the NESA region.

CT-SES 2019 examined best practices in countering violent extremism (CVE) as well as the unique socio-political and legal challenges of prosecuting and/or reintegrating jihadi fighters returning from the former ISIS caliphate to their home countries.

Participants—numbering over 40 and from countries including Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Lebanon, Egypt, the United States, and Iraq—heard from subject matter experts including NESA Director LTG (Ret.) Terry Wolff, the former Deputy Special Presidential Envoy to the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS ; Dr. Frances Brown, Fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace ; and Dr. Timothy Shah, Director of International Research at Georgetown University’s Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs.

One day of the two-week program was designed for participants to hear firsthand insights from policy practitioners from the U.S. Department of State, Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and Pentagon officials (including from the Joint Chiefs of Staff), who provided real-world examples of theoretical legal and moral challenges relating to national and international laws and the prosecution and / or de-radicalization of those who have fought with ISIS. Speakers emphasized the FBI and Department of Justice’s need for collective exploitable material to arrest fighters returning to the United States, and framed key challenges to current jihadi prosecution/rehabilitation regimes as lack of evidence, lack of information sharing between domestic and international agencies, and the lengthy processes behind de-classifying information that could be used as evidence. The CT-SES was led by NESA faculty member Dr. Jennifer Jefferis and Dr. Sam Greene, former Assistant Professor at the NESA Center and currently an Assistant Professor of Political Science and Global Studies at Shepherd University.



NESA Senior Executive Seminar “The New World Order”

From February 4-8, 2019, The NESA Center conducted the Senior Executive Seminar (SES), “The New World Order: Challenges and Opportunities”, attended by 36 participants from across the NESA region. The Center’s Senior Executive Seminars are a flagship program designed to provide senior-level policymakers from the region a comfortable forum to discuss critical geopolitical issues under the Chatham House rules of non-attribution. The SES “The New World Order” was led by Professor Anne Moisan, and featured guest lectures by VIPs in politics, academia, and Mideast affairs including Mr. Adam Smith, former Senior Advisor to the Director of the U.S. Treasury Department’s Office of Foreign Assets Control and former Director for Multilateral Affairs at the National Security Council; Stephen McNerney, Executive Director of the Project on Middle East Democracy; and LTG (ret.) Terry Wolff, Director of the NESA Center and former Deputy Envoy to the Global Coalition to Counter ISIS. Discussions over the course of the SES primarily focused on “Blacks Swans”—unforeseen watershed events—that the NESA region could realistically face, the impact of technological advancement (including drone warfare) on the region, changing views of religion, and counter-terrorism strategies.



NESA Washington Embassy Orientation

The NESA Center’s 2018 iteration of its annual Washington Embassy Orientation (WEO) Seminar took place at the Army and Navy Club October 29 to November 2, 2018, bringing together over 44 diplomatic officials from NESA region embassies in Washington. The 2018 WEO, led by Professor Daniel Curfiss, is an annual NESA Center course providing newly assigned diplomatic corps from the NESA region the opportunity to familiarize themselves with each other as well as the wider D.C. community. The NESA Center offers these select foreign embassy staff a background in U.S. foreign policy goals and objectives, the American political landscape, and the policy making process. Many NESA Center Washington Embassy Orientation courses are conducted in conjunction with a Washington Seminar Luncheon Discussion, one of NESA’s quarterly luncheon discussion series geared towards providing diplomatic officials from the NESA region and U.S. partner countries with a forum for a candid, substantive, and not-for-attribution discussion on issues key to regional security. In the above photo (r), Professor Brianne Todd moderates a conversation with Representatives Dennis Hertel (D-MI, 1981-1993) and James Moran (D-VA, 1991-2015) in a 2018 Washington Luncheon Discussion, which was focused on the then-upcoming 2018 U.S. midterm elections, and its implications for U.S. foreign policy towards the NESA region.

NESA Senior Executive Seminar “The New World Order”

The NESA Center hosted its second Executive Seminar (ES) of 2019 at the National Defense University, 4—15 March. Focusing on the theme “Security Along the Seams and Border Areas”, the two-week seminar provided a platform for participants across the NESA region to engage in rigorous discussion on issues of regional and global importance, with a special emphasis on the unique challenges facing border areas, like transnational crime, illicit networks, and immigration crime. The ES was led by NESA Professor Daniel Curfiss, with Professors John Gill, Ali Jalali, and Dr. Gawdat Bahgat acting as course facilitators. The Executive Seminar is a flagship NESA program geared towards select mid- to higher-level military and government officials from the NESA region, with the March 2019 ES convening 37 participants from 21 countries including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Lebanon, Iraq, Morocco, and Uzbekistan.

Discussion topics included tackling cyber as a new warfighting domain, Iran’s destabilizing actions throughout the region, countering terrorist and illicit networks, and how the American security apparatus and political system can meet such challenges. Guest lecturers included practitioners and subject-matter experts like Dr. George Perkovich of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; Ambassador (ret.) Marc Grossman; and Professor Paul Pillar of Georgetown University. In targeted group activities, participants discussed, debated, and advanced solutions towards an extant regional issue, and shared their insights and best practices with fellow participants.

As the seminar was conducted in Washington, D.C., participants toured Mount Vernon, as well as the U.S. Capitol and Library of Congress, meeting with Representative Dennis Hertel, who previously represented Michigan’s 14th district.



NESA-CENTCOM International Military Officers' Forums

NESA's IMOF programs are a unique collaboration between the NESA Center and CENTCOM, and offer a critical space for policymakers from the NESA region and beyond to discuss security cooperation and regional challenges.

The NESA Center first International Military Officer's Forum (IMOF) of 2019 was conducted 3-7 December 2018, focusing on the theme "Hotspots in Global Security". Representative discussion topics included the continuing work of the D-ISIS Coalition, the Syrian War, security dynamics in Asia and the Middle East, and U.S. global defense strategies. Special guest lecturers included Dr. Steven Cook, Senior Fellow for Middle East and Africa Studies, Council on Foreign Relations; Ambassador Barbara Leaf, Senior Fellow at Washington Institute for Near East Policy; Dr. Natan Sachs, Director of the Brookings Institution's Center for Middle East Policy; Dr. Michael Rubin, Resident Scholar at the American Enterprise Institute; and Dr. Seth Jones (Director of Transnational Threats Project and Senior Adviser of International Security Program, Center for Strategic International Studies). The seminar also featured talks by NESA Director LTG (Ret.) Terry Wolff, as well as NESA Deputy Director COL (Ret.) David Lamm and NESA Academic Dean Dr. Roger Kangas.

The NESA Center's second IMOF of 2019 was conducted May 6-10, 2019. The IMOF, led by NESA Professor Dr. Richard Russell, was attended by international CENTCOM personnel, with representative countries including the United States, France, Germany, Turkey, Romania, and Saudi Arabia. The seminar's dominant discussion topics included Russia's rise on the world stage, China's socio-economic transformation and newly aggressive military posture, great power competition, the future of warfare, and the shifting role of the United States in the Middle East. Participants heard from guest lecturers including notable subject matter experts like Mr. Elbridge Colby, Director of the Defense Program at Center for a New American Security; Dr. Patrick Cronin, Asia-Pacific Security Chair at the Hudson Institute; NBC/MSNBC National Security Contributor Dr. Evelyn Farkas; and LTG (Ret.) Terry Wolff and Dr. Roger Kangas, the NESA Center's Director and NESA Academic Dean, respectively.



NORTH AFRICA PROGRAMS

Highlights from NESA's 2019 engagement with North Africa

NESA-AFRICOM Tunisia National Defense Institute Seminar

Throughout FY19 and in partnership with AFRICOM, the NESA Center conducted its eighth annual Tunisian National Defense Institute (NDI) National Security Seminar Series. The Seminar was attended by 46 senior government officials from 17 Tunisian ministries, including from the President's Office and Tunisian Parliament, all of whom are enrolled in the Tunisian NDI class of 2018-2019.

The Seminar is part of a unique program offered through the Tunisian Ministry of Defense which convenes a working group throughout an academic year to advance whole-of-government approaches to critical national security and political challenges. Each class is assigned a research theme by the Minister of Defense, with this year's assignment being "Border Area Development Strategy", focusing on the economic development of border communities, a key challenge for Tunisia. The seminar was centered on assisting the participants in addressing border area development strategies, and to better equip them as they lead their country's democratic transition.

The Seminar was conducted as a three-part program: Phases I and III were conducted in Tunis, Tunisia (in January 2019 and May 2019, respectively), while Phase II was conducted in Washington, D.C. in March and April 2019. While in Washington, D.C., the NDI participants were honored to have been personally received by Tunisian Ambassador Fayçal Gouia, who spoke on U.S.-Tunisia bilateral relations, and additionally hosted private reception for participants at the Ambassador's Residence. All installments of the 2019 NESA-Tunisia NDI program were led by Professor Anne Moisan.

While in Washington, D.C., participants met with Tunisian Ambassador Fayçal Gouia, including in Seminar lecture sessions, and at a private reception at the Ambassador's Residence.



NESA-AFRICOM U.S.-North Africa Colonel's Program

In partnership with AFRICOM, the NESA Center conducted the first-ever US-North Africa Colonels Workshop 11-19 September 2019 for officers from North African countries, along with U.S. officers from West Point, AFRICOM, SOCAFRICA, the NESA Center, and OSD/African Policy. The Utah National Guard additionally participated as the State Partner for Morocco through the National Guard State Partnership. The Colonel's Program was divided into two components, with week one activities held in Washington, D.C., and week two activities held at the United State Military Academy in West Point, New York, and New York City, New York. The D.C. program concluded with a Military panel from OSD, AFRICOM, and SOCAFRICA on security cooperation.



While at West Point, the group was joined by several faculty, members of the West Point Counter Terrorism Center, and cadets from Egypt and Tunisia, with two full days devoted to participants focusing on a table top exercise demanding responses to a series of national security challenges discussed by lecturers in the D.C. portion of the program. The workshop concluded in New York City, with a presentation at the NY Police Department's Counterterrorism Center by Detective Robert Sirignano (pictured lower r). The Workshop was led by Professor Anne Moisan.



NESA-AFRICOM Illicit Commons and Border Security Seminar



In partnership with AFRICOM, the NESA Center conducted a NESA-AFRICOM "Tying Border Security to Illicit Commons from Latin America to Africa" Workshop 29 April – 3 May 2019 in Tunis, Tunisia. The 2019 Workshop, the fourth in NESA's continuing illicit commons workshop series with African and Latin American participants, focused in particular on understanding what fuels the "business" of illicit commons on both continents. Participants discussed the importance of effective border management in combating illicit commons, as well as related topics including human trafficking and terrorism. Speakers and panelists were drawn from countries including Brazil, Colombia, Egypt, Mali, Mexico, and Nigeria. The workshop, led by Professor Anne Moisan, concluded with a briefing by NESA Director LTG (ret) Terry Wolff and was attended by over 30 participants.

GULF PROGRAMS

Highlights from NESA's 2019 engagement with the Gulf

Saudi Curriculum Development Workshop Series

Throughout FY2019, the NESA Center conducted a series of curriculum development workshops for senior faculty of the Saudi Arabian Armed Forces Command and Staff College (SAF WC). While some sessions introduced new material, the majority of the Saudi workshop participants enjoyed the benefit of being returning NESA alumni, which allowed workshop lectures and case studies to employ and evaluate concepts introduced in previous sessions.

The NESA team leveraged this experience and longstanding relationship to advance the transformation of the Saudi Arabian Armed Forces Command and Staff College into the Saudi Arabian National Defense University. The workshops included standard curriculum development topics such as “Drafting Course Evaluations”, “Teaching Methods”, and “Drafting Lesson Objectives,” as well as topics intended to develop expertise in the subject matter for each course. The majority of the Saudi Curriculum Development workshop installments were conducted at the NESA facilities at the National Defense University and were taught by Professors Daniel Baltrusaitis and Richard Wiersema. Some sessions taught by Professor David Des Roches onsite at the Saudi War College in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, including a weeklong November 2018 intensive course curriculum on disaster management taught to 50 Saudi War College participants.

The workshops serve as key waypoints in developing SAF WC capacity to write and maintain a war college curriculum. This capacity is essential to attaining the SAF PME transformation objective of an academically accredited war college program. Such cooperation with the Saudi War College strengthens the ability of senior Saudi officers to understand the U.S. approach to problem-solving and prepares them to work with U.S. forces in joint and coalition environments.



"I have been teaching at the war course for five years, and this week, for the first time, I understand what I need to be doing."

BG Saeed Moghis Alqahtani, SAFWC Director of Strategic Leadership

NESA-Raytheon-Royal Saudi Air Defense Senior Officer Seminar

NESA conducted a two week Royal Saudi Air Defense Forces Senior Officer Seminar in collaboration with Raytheon, with the NESA iteration of the Officers' Seminar conducted 12 – 15 October at NDU. This unique NESA–private sector partnership brings up to fifteen senior Saudi Air Defense Officers to the United States for discussions of strategic issues, as well as visits to various national security installations. The delegation was led by Major General Mohammed Zoheir M Alameri, the commander of the Jeddah Air Defense Region.

The program started in Los Angeles, where Professor and program director David Des Roches presented on developments in Iranian hybrid warfare and missile attack capabilities. The delegation visited Raytheon Space Programs and the University of Southern California. The program then shifted to Washington D.C., where participants met with Senate Foreign

Relations Committee staffers. The group also received an in-depth program at NESA with presentations from former Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, former US Ambassador to Yemen Stephen Seche, and former U.S. Ambassador to Bahrain Adam Ereli. The program then moved to Boston, where the team visited the Early Warning Radar System at Cape Cod and the Raytheon factory (home of the Patriot radar) at Andover, Massachusetts. This was the tenth iteration of this program, which provides NESA expertise to an extremely influential Saudi military audience at minimal cost to the U.S. government.



NESA-QAFSSC-IAI Middle East in 2025 Workshop



In coordination with the Qatari Armed Forces Strategic Studies Center and the Istituto Affari Internazionali, the NESA Center conducted an intensive two-day workshop 10-11 January 2019 in Rome, Italy, “The Middle East in 2025”.

The workshop framed discussion in the context of key issues such as energy relations, state-society relationships, the role of regional and global powers, and counterterrorism. Consisting of numerous roundtables, conversations focused primarily on the post-Arab Spring decline of state power and state institutions as felt in Egypt, Iraq, and Syria, and the resultant power vacuum in the Arab world. Other discussion topics included the war in Yemen; a perceived lack of coherency in U.S. and European Union (E.U.) foreign policy towards the Middle East; and sociopolitical issues like unemployment throughout the region.

Representatives from the E.U., European think-tanks (including Chatham House and the German Marshall Fund), U.S. think-tanks (including the Council on Foreign Relations and the Brookings Institute), Georgetown Doha, and Qatar University participated in the discussion. The program was led by NESA Dean Roger Kangas, and Professors Richard Russell and Dr. Gawdat Bahgat.

LEVANT PROGRAMS

Highlights from NESAs's 2019 engagement with the Levant

Lebanese Armed Forces Seminar 2019

As part of its annual engagement course with the Lebanese Armed Forces Fouad Shehab Command and Staff College (LAFSCSC), the NESAs Center conducted the seminar "Collaboration, Decentralization, and Fragmentation: Prospects and Problems in a New World Order" 15-26 April. Twenty-five officers from the LAFSCSC attended the seminar, which was conducted in sessions held at the NESAs Center facilities at the National Defense University, Fort Hamilton (New York), and the United Nations, New York, New York.

NESAs's continuing engagement with the LAFSC is focused on fostering regional development and discovering the most promising alignments in American and Lebanese interests over the coming years. Directed by Professor Dr. Jennifer Jefferis, the 2019 iteration of the LAFSC seminar focused on how regional development in the Levant has been challenged by the ongoing second and third order effects of the conflict in Syria, as well as changing global power dynamics. Participants were especially interested in discussing means to address the Syrian refugee swell within Lebanon, already struggling with complex socio-political and economic issues.

Participants interfaced with guest speakers including Dr. Anthony Cordesman, Chair of Strategy at Center for Strategic and International Studies; Mr. Robert Jenkins, Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID); and Shadi Hamid, Fellow at the Brookings Institution. In Washington, D.C., participants were briefed at the USAID headquarters and met with former Congressman the Honorable Martin Frost at the U.S. Capitol. Other off-site seminar activities occurred at the UN headquarters in New York City and at Fort Hamilton, where participants engaged in an intensive three-day group exercise designed to provide tools for conflict analysis.



D-ISIS Global Coalition Working Group Co-Leads Meeting

In coordination with the U.S. Department of State, the NESAC Center hosted the Global Coalition Against ISIS Working Group Co-Leads Meeting 28-29 November 2019, attended by representatives of 23 countries from the 79-member Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. The event provided a critical forum for member countries to determine the Coalition Core and Global requirements for 2019, with participants organized into working groups exploring one of the following key subjects: communications, counter-finance, foreign terrorist fighters, and stabilization. Following discussion and analysis, each group advanced recommendations on how to effectively degrade and destroy remaining ISIS holdouts, as the terrorist group enters a new counter-insurgency phase following defeat on the battlefield. The event featured participation from VIPs including the Coalition's then-Special Presidential Envoy Brett McGurk, NESAC Director and Coalition Deputy Envoy LTG (ret.) Terry Wolff, and U.S. Special Representative for Syria Engagement Ambassador James Jeffrey (currently the D-ISIS Coalition's Special Envoy).

Highlights from the two days of in-depth discussions included the Communications Working Group sharing best practices on how Coalition members can amplify counterterror messaging, including by interfacing with newly-appointed Official Coalition Representative Nancy Jamal, who was also in attendance. The Counter-Finance Working Group advocated for “mapping” ISIS’ remaining sources of revenue, and for creating a shared Coalition information-sharing database, a proposal echoed by the Foreign Terrorist Fighters Working Group. The Stabilization Working Group stressed the need to prioritize civilians still trapped in conflict zones as the stabilization phase of global D-ISIS efforts assumes priority, and of the need to push for continued conversations with the Iraqi government relating to state-building and reconstruction.

The challenge of rebuilding in territories formerly occupied by ISIS in war-torn Syria—particularly in Syria's east—was a heavy topic of discussion, with a special lecture by Ambassador James Jeffrey providing crucial insight. Brett McGurk and LTG (Ret.) Wolff also lectured on the Coalition's remaining work in stabilizing a region left devastated by the terrorist group, and in eradicating the enduring ISIS “brand” after the group's physical defeat.





CENTRAL ASIA PROGRAMS

Highlights from NESAs 2019 engagement with Central Asia



Silk Road Future Leaders Seminar

The NESAs Center conducted the Silk Road Future Leaders Seminar 2019, "National Interests in a Globalized World" 1-5 April. The seminar convened rising young leaders from NESAs states across Central and South Asia including Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Nepal, and India. The Silk Road Future Leaders Seminar is an annual NESAs program facilitated by Professor Brianne Todd, with this year's iteration exploring regional development, stability, and Central Asia's widening role in a changing world order.

The seminar featured guest speakers from the Washington, D.C. policy and think tank community and included NESAs Professor and South Asia expert John Wood, and Ambassador Richard Hoagland, Former Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs.

While in Washington, D.C., participants toured the U.S. Capitol building (pictured bottom right), where they engaged with the Honorable Dennis Hertel, who previously represented Michigan's 14th District, and additionally met with Brigadier General Trent Kelly, the Representative of Mississippi's 1st District and NESAs 2018 Distinguished Alumnus, who discussed his role in expanding U.S.-Uzbekistan relations. At a special Directors Dinner featuring NESAs Director LTG (Ret.) Terry Wolff, seminar participants were joined by H.E. Javlon Vakhobov, Uzbekistan's Ambassador to the U.S. (and himself a NESAs alumnus), who spoke on transformative socio-political changes underway in Central and South Asia, a conversation which fittingly dovetailed with the seminar's theme, "National Interests in a Globalized World".

Central Asia-Afghanistan Security Executive Seminar

During NESAs annual Central-Asia Afghanistan Security Executive Seminar, conducted June 24-28, 2019, participants from Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan explored the theme, "Water Security in Greater Central Asia." The seminar focused on water security, while participants also examined related topics including water conflict and crime, the concept of "water theft", and the differences among international, national, regional, and local regulations governing water usage. Participants heard from subject matter experts including Fatemeh Aman from the Atlantic Council, Michael Kugelman from the Woodrow Wilson Center, Mariya Pak from the World Bank, and Vanda Felbab-Brown of the Brookings Institution. Outside the classroom, participants heard from NESAs Center alumnus and Tajikistan's Ambassador to the U.S., H.E. Farhod Salim, on Tajikistan's experience with regional water projects, and heard from Mary Melnyk on U.S. initiatives to combat water insecurity and climate change in Central and South Asia onsite at USAID. Participants generally agreed that continued U.S. action in Central Asian is vital. The seminar ended on a positive note as participants reiterated their commitment to continuing to cooperate with the U.S. on regional water issues and highlighted successful local and multilateral programs, such as the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea, and proposed new frameworks for future cooperation.





Expanding U.S.-Central Asia Ties

Despite its highly strategic location bordering some of America's principal adversaries and some states' strong commitment to socio-political reforms, Central Asia has not been "central" to U.S. foreign and defense policy. The NESACenter is seeking to change that, with notable interaction with key Central Asian states on matters of mutual concern.

Represented by Professors John Wood and Brianne Todd, the NESACenter conducted a seminar on U.S. security policy in coordination with theTurkmenistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan 30 April—3 May 2019. The seminar focused on topics including the U.S. security posture towards Central and South Asia, Afghanistan, and varied approaches to countering radicalization and extremism. Participants included officials from Turkmenistan's Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Defense, and National Security.

From June 6-10, Professors Wood and Todd returned to Central Asia, joined by NESACenter Dean Dr. Roger Kangas and National War College Professor Dr. Mariya Omelicheva in Tashkent, Uzbekistan (pictured above). The NESACenter/NDU delegation engaged with a variety of Uzbek academics and experts, including talks with faculty and students at the University of World Economy and Diplomacy and the Ministry of Defense's Armed Forces Academy. On June 10, the NESACenter co-hosted a conference on U.S.-Uzbek relations with the independent think tank Ma'no. U.S. Ambassador Daniel Rosenblum provided remarks, characterizing such cooperation between U.S. and Uzbek academic institutions as unprecedented. The NESACenter faculty also visited the Analytical Center for International Relations Studies and Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies for additional discussions with Uzbek experts, including several NESACenter alumni. Regional security issues, such as Afghanistan, ISIS, and U.S.-Iran ties, were of particular interest throughout the visit.

A delegation from the Uzbekistan Armed Forces Academy also visited the NESACenter September 9-10 for a series of meetings and lectures, including with NDU President Fritz Roegge and Dr. Amer Latif, Central Asia Policy Advisor at the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, as well as with Rep. Trent Kelly (R, MI-1), onsite at the U.S. Capitol. The visit was led by Professor Todd, who hosted the group in part to discuss NESACenter's forthcoming 2020-2021 engagement with Uzbekistan. Delegation members included Major General Azizbek Ikramov, Uzbekistan's Deputy Minister of Defense and Head of the Armed Forces Academy.

SOUTH ASIA PROGRAMS

Highlights from NESAs's 2019 engagement with South Asia

NESA-ARCENT CASA Symposium

From 26-28 August, Jeffrey Payne, the NESAs Center's Academic Affairs Manager, helped lead U.S. Army Central (ARCENT)'s 2019 Central and South Asia Symposium. Taking place at the Crystal Gateway Marriott Hotel in Arlington, Virginia, the event brought together ARCENT's leadership, key U.S. state national guard components, and army representatives from Central and South Asia states. Regional states that took part include Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. Topics discussed at the symposium included a review of U.S. policy towards the region, discussions on border security, the status of exercise Steppe Eagle, and discussions on ISIS's footprint in the Central and South Asia Region, among others. LTG (Ret.) Terry Wolff, NESAs Director and previously the Deputy Presidential envoy to the D-ISIS Coalition, spoke to the participants regarding the regional impact of violent extremism and ISIS in particular.



Other speakers included VIPs in foreign and defense policy, including the State Department's Jonathan Henick, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Central Asia, Tim Wilder, Afghanistan Desk Acting Director, Clark Adams, Director of Central Asia, and Pete Velz, Director of the Afghanistan Resource Policy and Requirements Office, pictured at right with Mr. Payne, who moderated their panel on U.S. Central Asia policy.



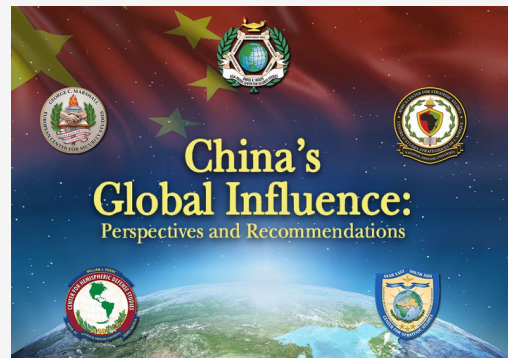
DOD Regional Center Workshop "China's Global Reach"

The NESA Center, along with the four other Department of Defense Regional Centers, participated in the workshop "China's Global Reach: A Security Assessment" January 30, 2018 - February 1, 2019. The workshop was held at NESA's sister center, the Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies (APCSS) in Honolulu, Hawaii, and convened 56 experts from the five Regional Centers, as well as key US government offices, DoD Commands, and other organizations.

The NESA team was led by Dean Dr. Roger Kangas and supported by professors Dr. Gawdat Bahgat and Professor Jack Gill. The workshop's aim was to identify activities conducted by the People's Republic of China (PRC) throughout the world that may impact U.S. foreign and security policy. Specifically participants sought to answer: there is a "strategic competition" taking place between the U.S. and the PRC, what measures should the U.S. government take to ensure that its national interests, and those of its allies and partner countries, remain secure?

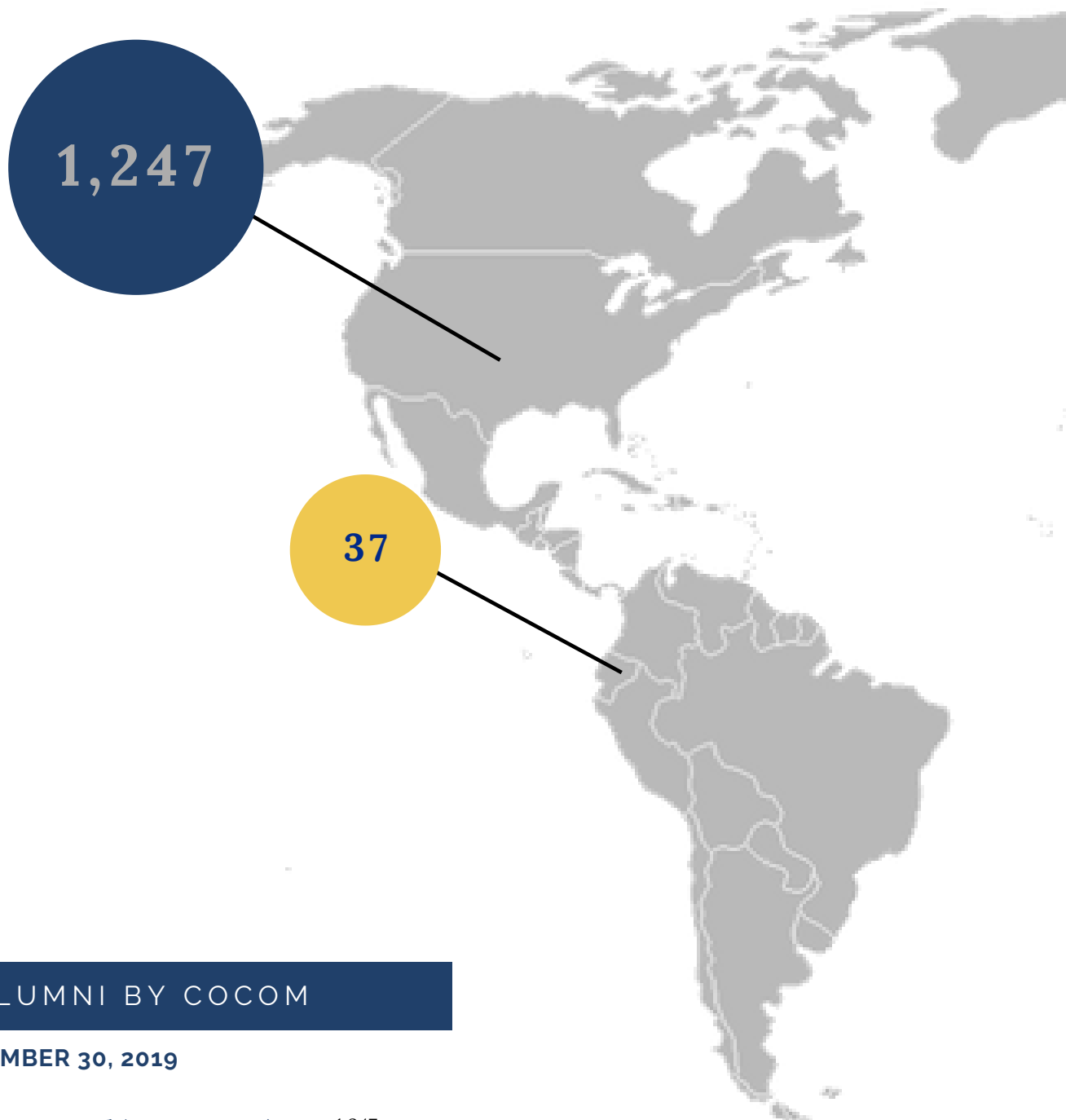
The workshop's activities included plenary discussions, presentations by Regional Center faculty and select outside experts, as well as working group discussions that addressed the topics of measuring influence, strategic competition, and policy recommendations. The intrinsic value of the NESA Center and its partner Regional Centers was highlighted in the wide-ranging discussions of how the PRC's policies adjust to different geographic regions and the perspectives of the countries in those regions--and how understanding regional and sub-regional dynamics will allow for more effective action by the United States, if and when it is needed.

The workshop marked the first time that all five DoD Regional Centers worked in collaboration on such a large workshop and towards policy-focused product. The five Regional Centers agreed to continue their collaboration in the coming fiscal year (FY20), and key findings from the workshop were compiled into a published volume, "China's Global Reach", released in summer 2019 and accessible on the NESA Center website.





NESA's Global

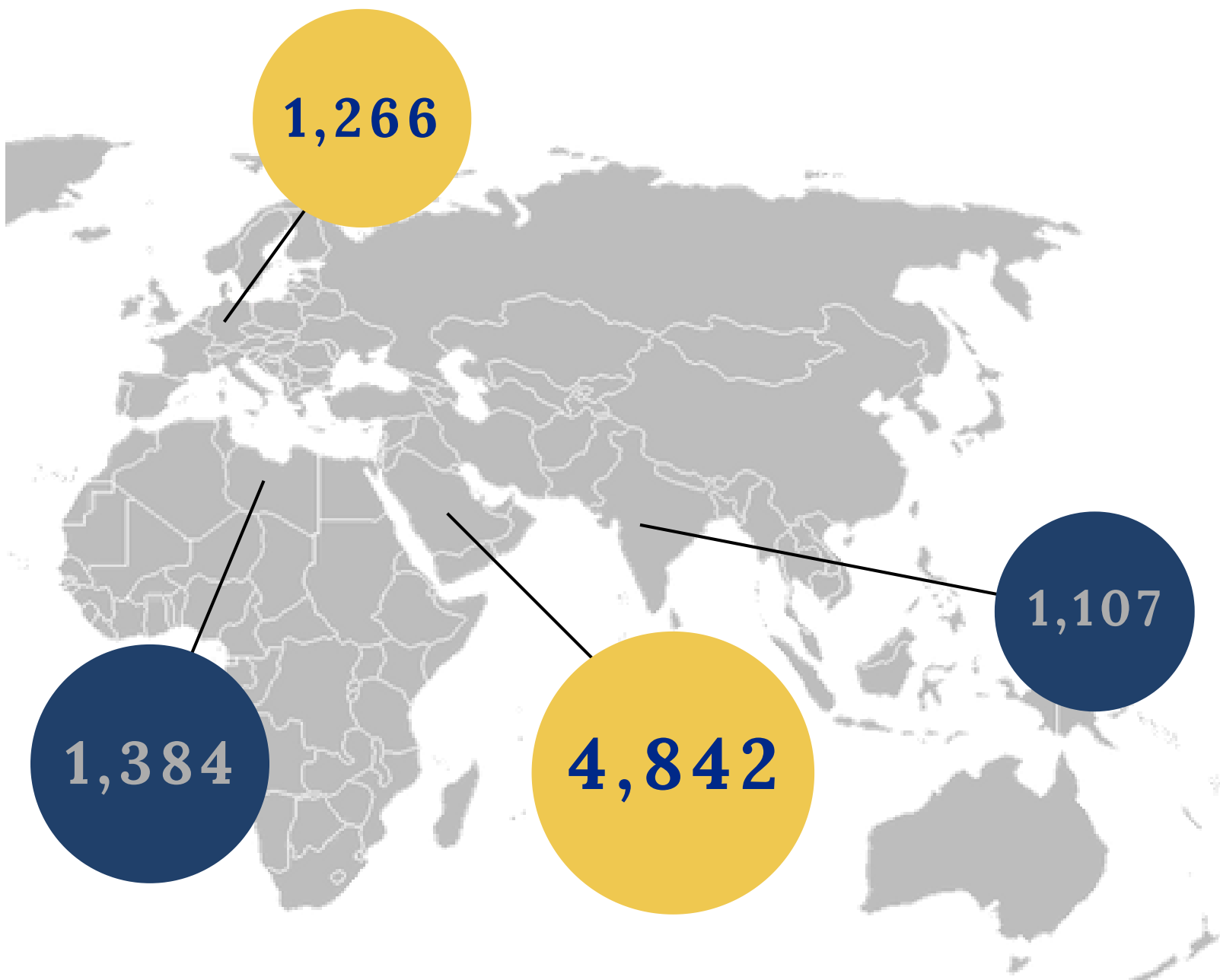


NESA ALUMNI BY COCOM

AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2019

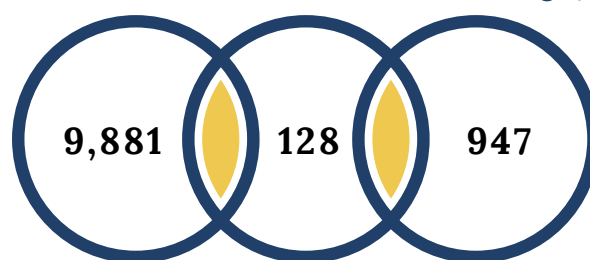
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|--|-------|
| U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM): | 1,247 |
| U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM): | 37 |
| U.S. European Command (EUCOM): | 1,266 |
| U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM): | 1,384 |
| U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM): | 4,842 |
| U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM): | 1,107 |

Network



NESA BY THE NUMBERS

AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2019



Total Alumni Countries Engaged Alumni Added In FY19



Building Relationships. Enhancing Security

**THE NEAR EAST SOUTH ASIA
CENTER FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES**

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