NESA Region Trends – FOCUS ON SOUTH ASIA

- **Bangladeshi politics and Bangladesh foreign policy is increasingly being forced to navigate tensions between India and China.** Official government statements and media interviews routinely make mention of the tensions. This, of course, complicates Bangladesh’s decision making as it has long-standing ties with India and has increasingly economic and political relations with Beijing.

- **Resurgence of Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) in the Pakistan-Afghanistan border areas.** This terrorist group was severely weakened (and splintered) by (belated) Pakistan security operations (2014–17) and facilitated by US drone strikes targeting TTP leadership. In the last six to nine months they are showing strong signs of regrouping and many splinter groups have announced their merger into central TTP. Militant activity concentrated in former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA).

- **India-China tensions are moving beyond the contested border areas and into the Eastern Indian Ocean/Bay of Bengal.** India is seeking to project power further east by increasingly employing the Adaman and Nicobar Island zone, and regional foreign policy among Bay of Bengal littoral states increasingly discusses China’s diplomatic, economic, and potential security presence in the region.
NESA Seminars

Senior Executive Seminar

The NESA Center held a Senior Executive Seminar (SES) themed “Gray Zone Warfare and Great Power Competition.” The week-long seminar is designed to deepen participants’ understanding of the evolving nature of modern warfare as waged by a Whole-of-Government and using elements beyond a conventional military. Gray zone warfare is waged not just in times of open conflict but also during heightened tension. It was attended by 83 participants from 24 countries. Led by Professor Des Roches with remarks/facilitation provided by Professor Jalali and Academic Dean Kangas. 


Visit www.NESA-Center.org for additional information.
International Military Officers’ Forum (IMOF)

The NESA Center held an International Military Officers’ Forum (IMOF) seminar themed “Great Power Competition and Implications for Central Command’s Region.” The three-day seminar featured internationally-recognized scholar-practitioners on the NESA Center faculty and elsewhere. The program was designed to educate over 150 foreign military officers stationed at U.S. Central Command as well as those assigned to the Joint Chiefs of Staff and U.S. Special Operations Command. The seminar dove into the contours of the emerging great power competition between the United States, Russia, and China and explored the implications for the U.S. Central Command in its area of responsibility. Featured remarks from Academic Dean Kangas, Professor Bahgat, Professor Abbas, Professor Todd, and Mr. Payne. [https://nesa-center.org/imof-great-power-competition-implications-for-centcom-aor/](https://nesa-center.org/imof-great-power-competition-implications-for-centcom-aor/)
Executive Seminar

Dr. Michael Sharnoff, supported by Dr. Hassan Abbas and Col. Daniel Curfiss, coordinated the NESA Center Executive Seminar attended by 93 foreign policy and security professionals from 23 countries. The theme of the seminar was “Unseen Opponents: The Security Challenges of Pandemics.” Participants were to achieve a set of objectives at the conclusion of the seminar, including discussing the scope/depth of the pandemic; the economic, political, social, and security impacts of the pandemic; the relationship between health challenges and national/international security; and strategies or lessons to better prepare for future pandemics. https://nesa-center.org/executive-seminar-unseen-opponents-the-security-challenges-of-pandemics/
**Dr. Hassan Abbas**


**Dr. Gawdat Bahgat**

November 18, 2020 – Released “Biden Administration and Iran: The Way Forward” within the Gulf International Forum. He highlighted how Washington’s leadership change should be viewed by all Gulf countries as a strategic opportunity to engage in a dialogue to address their underlying common threats and emerging opportunities. [https://gulfif.org/biden-administration-and-iran-the-way-forward/](https://gulfif.org/biden-administration-and-iran-the-way-forward/)

December 23, 2020 – Published an article titled, “Iranian-Israeli Confrontation – the Cyber Domain”, Middle East Policy. [https://doi.org/10.1111/mepo.12516](https://doi.org/10.1111/mepo.12516)

**David Des Roches**

November 13, 2020 – In a video posted by the Gulf International Forum (GIF) and as a senior fellow at GIF, Des Roches talked about the priority for the Joe Biden administration in the Gulf region to come to an arrangement with Iran to rejoin The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z2glGtxbgTI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z2glGtxbgTI)


December 9, 2020 – On the subject of modern Turkey, participated in the Columbia University Middle East Forum (an ongoing series of off-the-record lectures hosted by the Columbia Middle East Studies department).

**Ali Ahmad Jalali**

November 13, 2020 – Served as the guest of a TV show of Deutsche Welle (Germany) debating with Taliban representative Mawlawi Wasiq on the peace process in Afghanistan.

**Dr. Roger Kangas**


**Dr. Richard L. Russell**

Richard Wiersema

December 1, 2020 – Delivered a lecture, titled Perspectives on Strategic Leadership, to faculty and students at the Royal Jordanian National Defense College. This lecture is the first in a series of four that NESA will deliver to the college on topics their leadership requested as part of continuing our relationship and support during the current travel restrictions.

Michael Sharnoff

November 9, 2020 – Gave a lecture titled “Shifting Dynamics of the Middle East, Israel, and It’s Neighbors” to the Council of Former Federal Executives & Associates.


NESA Digital Series

Dr. Hassan Abbas

November 2, 2020 – In the eighth segment of the NESA Interview Series, Professor Hassan Abbas interviewed Mr. Shuja Nawaz, a political and strategic analyst who is currently a Distinguished Fellow at the Atlantic Council. https://nesa-center.org/us-pakistan-relations-at-another-fork-in-the-road-a-conversation-withsouth-asia-scholar-shuja-nawaz/

Fahad Malaikah

November 10, 2020 – Interviewed Dr. Arslan Chikhaoui for the sixth edition of the NESA Alumni Virtual Interview Series. The conversation focused on outside players and partners in Algeria within the context of the so-called “great power competition”. https://nesa-center.org/outside-players-and-partners-in-algeria-dr-arslan-chikhaoui/


December 14, 2020 – In the tenth edition of the NESA Alumni Virtual Interview Series, Mr. Malaikah interviewed Professor Steven Blockmans on the challenges and prospects for U.S. – EU relations under a Biden presidency, as well as how the trans-Atlantic relationship going forward may impact relevant parts of the NESA region. Professor Blockmans is the Director of Research, Head of EU Foreign Policy, and Head of Institutional Affairs at the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS), based in Brussels. https://nesa-center.org/the-biden-presidency-and-u-s-eu-relations-challenges-and-prospects/

Jeffrey S. Payne

November 3, 2020 – Interviewed RDML Curt Renshaw for NESA’s IOR Digital Series. RDML Renshaw discussed not only the complex set of challenges in the waters of the larger MENA region, but he also highlighted how the pandemic of 2020 created new hurdles for maritime forces in the region to overcome. https://nesa-center.org/marsec-perspectives-with-rdml-curt-renshaw/

December 1, 2020 – NESA’s Jeff Payne talked with Dr. Geoffrey Gresh, Dr. Joel Wuthnow, and Dr. Thomas Lynch for NESA’s IOR Digital Series on how the U.S. sees
NESA Digital Series

priorities in the Indian Ocean Region and what challenges need to be addressed on the horizon. [https://nesa-center.org/u-s-concepts-for-the-indian-ocean-region/](https://nesa-center.org/u-s-concepts-for-the-indian-ocean-region/)


NESA Alumni Contributions


NESA Alumni Engagement

Total NESA Alumni: 10,636
Total Countries: 134

Total Alumni Engaged in FY20: 635
Total Alumni Engaged thus far in FY21: 120

Visit the new NESA Alumni Interactive Map: https://nesa-center.org/alumni-map/

NESA Upcoming Events

NESA Executive Seminar
February 1–11, 2021
Washington, DC

NESA Washington Embassy Orientation
March 22–26, 2021
Washington, DC

NESA Executive Seminar
February 11, 2021
Washington, DC

NESA Senior Executive Seminar
March 29, 2021–April 2, 2021
Washington, DC