NESA Region Trends – FOCUS ON THE GULF

• Perceptions among the GCC states is that internal disputes are suspended, not ended. Disputing parties remain vigilant to see if another state begins to “backslide” or any other action that could justify a resumption of the intra-GCC rupture.

• Saudi Arabia seeks to build momentum towards their perspective that the cessation of offensive support in Yemen contributes to Saudi security, though this perspective has not gained ground among other international actors. Furthermore, the release of the UN panel of experts report on Yemen highlights, among many things, that the Houthis have been stealing humanitarian aid. This confirmation overshadowed criticism of Saudi and Emirati engagement in Yemen.

• The revocation of Houthi sanctions is being poorly received in the region. Argued as a mechanism to show goodwill, it has done little to ease regional worries and reinforces the perspective that Yemen is deeply, deeply broken.

• The region, particularly GCC states, are seeking any and all signals regarding the prospect of new negotiations with Iran ala a new nuclear deal. Speculation is rampant with many questions surrounding what terms would such a deal be based upon? Will regional powers have a voice in negotiations? Will Iran’s missile program be a subject of such negotiations?

• President Biden confirmed that the U.S. Embassy in Israel will remain in Jerusalem. Israel welcomed this announcement and Arab media basically did not cover it.
NESA Programs & Events

Chatham House Workshop

In a virtual event lead by Dr. Gawdat, The NESA Center met with European experts from Chatham House and other European think-tanks to discuss the future of US-Iran relations under the Biden Administration. NESA director and experts provided the U.S. perspective, while the European experts explained how Iranian leaders read the political map in Washington. The discussion also addressed the role major European powers (France, Germany, and the United Kingdom) are likely to play to close the broad gap between Washington and Tehran and “revive” the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action/nuclear deal. https://nesa-center.org/european-think-tanks-discuss-the-future-of-us-iran-relations-under-the-biden-administration/

Chatham House Workshop
January 29, 2021

Speakers at the Chatham House Workshop from top left: Dr. Sanam Vakil, LTG (Ret.) Terry Wolff, Bijan Khajepour, Dr. Mike Bell, and Roxane Farmanfarmaian.

Visit www.NESA-Center.org for additional information.
Dr. Hassan Abbas

**January 28, 2021** – Delivered a lecture for National Defense University’s (NDU) Reserve Component National Security Course (RCNSC) series focusing on “Iran, Geopolitics, and Sectarianism.” The session had 125 participants.

Dr. Gawdat Bahgat

**January 22, 2021** – Along with David Des Roches, spoke to about 20 graduates at Al-Khawayan University (Morocco). The goal was to provide students the U.S. perspective on counter-terrorism and investment in human capital, gender equality, and women empowerment.

**January 24, 2021** – Spoke at an academic conference on Economic and Political Stability in West Asia and the Middle East. The conference was organized by a university in New Delhi, India with about 40 attendees. An edited volume with the papers and presentations will be published.

David Des Roches

**January 27, 2021** – Participated in a live-panel discussion for the Gulf International Forum. Other speakers included: Ambassador Ron Neumann, Ambassador Barbara Bodine, Abdulghani Al-Iryani, and Mohammed Zaher Sahloul. The focus was on The Way Forward for America’s Foreign Policy in Yemen. Professor David Des Roches remarks spoke of the difficulty of developing policy which can punish the bad while not harming the good, of the inherent problems of sanction based policies, and the regional views of the Yemen conflict. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IQRFgK9WTC8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IQRFgK9WTC8)

**January 29, 2021** – Featured specialist on a program for the National Council on US-Arab Relations. Specialists explored the Biden Presidency, the GCC, and Iran. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FUbeOU0ekjE&t=2740s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FUbeOU0ekjE&t=2740s)

Ali Ahmad Jalali

**January 28, 2021** – Interviewed by researchers from the Stimson Center and USIP (United States Institute of Peace) for a report on Afghanistan-Pakistan relations.

Anne Moisan

**January 28, 2021** – Professor Moisan along with faculty from the William J. Perry Center (WJPC) – Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies and the George C. Marshall Center (GCMC) – European Center for Security Studies brought a North African, Latin American, and European group of Alumni together for an on-line session to discuss Transnational Challenges. Presentations were provided by Professor Celina Realuyo and Dr. Benjamin Nickels. Followed by a series of moderated open discussions.

**January 28, 2021** – Conducted the first-ever Women, Peace, and Security add-on workshop with women attending the Executive Seminar 02-21. Effort was to build and mentor a cadre of senior women security experts from the NESA region.

Jeffrey S. Payne

NESA Faculty & Staff Engagement

**Michael Sharnoff**


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**Fahad Malaikah**


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**Jeffrey S. Payne**


NESA Alumni Contributions

NESA Alumni Engagement

Total NESA Alumni: 10,637
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 Senior Executive Seminar
March 29, 2021–April 2, 2021
Washington, DC

NESA Washington Seminar
February 11, 2021
Washington, DC

NESA Washington Embassy Orientation
April 8, 2021
Washington, DC