NESA Region Trends – CLIMATE CHANGE

• **People and governments in the NESA region seem interested in “doing something” to address climate change.** In the last several years, extreme weather (i.e., flooding, extreme heat, and drought) has been more frequent and harder to deny. Like other regions and countries, several Middle Eastern countries demand and expect financial and technical help from Europe and the United States.

• **The COP 27 Loss and Damage Fund Announcement was met with positive responses from the developing world.** Still, many regional organizations and institutions in those countries are skeptical of the efficiency of any fund’s distribution.

• **Venice’s newly unveiled retractable seawall to disrupt abnormal high tides is being highlighted throughout the NESA AOR** as an indication of the multiplying costs of dealing with sea level rise. The Venice system is meant to only operate temporarily and is overwhelmed at a 30 cm sea level rise. The cost was in the billions (USD). Developing states do not have the resources to build such mechanisms, and in the Eastern Indian Ocean, sea level rise will certainly overwhelm some nation-states. Mitigation and alternative solutions are being pursued, but planning is increasingly looking toward a worst-case scenario.
Washington Embassy Orientation Seminar

From 17–21 October 2022, the Near East South Asia (NESA) Center for Strategic Studies conducted a Washington Embassy Orientation Seminar in Washington, D.C. The week-long orientation, titled “Working in Washington,” featured a range of speakers, including diplomats, national security professionals, academics, business leaders, and journalists. As newly arrived foreign government representatives in Washington, participants were advised on how to navigate the Washington bureaucracy and cultivate productive relationships that will allow them to advance their country’s interests. Course Director Assistant Professor Brianne Todd moderated the sessions. The orientation consisted of ten sessions with presentations from NESA Center leadership and faculty, including Director LTG Terry Wolff, USA (Ret.), U.S. Army War College Fellow COL Louis Kangas, Distinguished Professor Dr. Hassan Abbas, Professor David Des Roches, and external speakers. On the last day of the seminar, embassy officials, who were also NESA Center Alumni, reflected on some of the best practices and lessons they learned while working in Washington. Specifically, what would have been helpful to know when they first arrived in the United States and how they have embraced opportunities and resolved challenges they encountered. https://nesa-center.org/washington-embassy-orientation-seminar-2022/
Saudi Ministry Of Defense Conflict Termination Workshop

From 23–27 October 2022, the NESA Center conducted a mobile training team course of instruction on conflict termination on conflict termination theory, negotiations theory, and case studies for the Saudi Ministry of Defense (MOD). The week-long workshop was held in Riyadh, KSA. The Saudis are looking for a way to end the Yemen conflict while preserving their security interests. NESA Center Associate Professor David Des Roches started the first day of the workshop with two theoretical sessions, “Introduction to War Termination: Concepts” and “Basics of Negotiations.” The next few days focused on “Consideration of Modern Weaponry” and case studies with “U.S. – Mexico 1916,” “Israel – Lebanon 2006,” and “U.S. – Afghanistan 2021.” The final classroom day reviewed “Iran Proxy Strategy: Implications” and “War Termination as a Whole of Government Issue.”

Royal Jordanian National Defense College Collaboration with the NESA Center

From 25–27 October 2022, The Near East South Asia (NESA) Center for Strategic Studies hosted a visit by Brigadier General Azzam Irsheid Alrawahneh, the recently appointed Commandant of the Royal Jordanian National Defense College (RJNDC). Brigadier General Alrawahneh was accompanied by the RJNDC Faculty Director, two officers from the Jordanian Center for Counter Terrorism and Extremism, and the Jordanian Deputy Defense Attache to the United States. The delegation was welcomed by National Defense University (NDU) President LTG Michael Plehn and enjoyed open and constructive discussions with faculty and senior leaders at the NESA Center, the National War College, the Eisenhower School, the College of International Security Affairs, the Institute for National Strategic Studies, and the Center for Applied Strategic Learning. Discussions encompassed curriculum development, RJNDC capacity building, student and faculty interactions, and broader collaboration on regional security issues. It was concluded that a committed partnership arrangement between the NESA Center and RJNDC could significantly enhance Regional Security initiatives. NESA Center Associate Dean Charles Marks and Professor Richard Wiersema will take the lead in developing and synchronizing a closer relationship between the RJNDC and National Defense University components.

NESA-Africom Transnational Threats: Criminal Insurgency Online Round Table

On 26 October 2022, Professor Anne Moisan conducted the “NESA-AFRICOM Transnational Threats: Criminal Insurgency” Online Round Table, the last in the series of in-person and online sessions stretching through 2022. This specific session was Part II/II with NESA-AFRICOM Alumni from the 13–23 June 2022 sessions held in Tunis, Tunisia. “Criminal Insurgency” has become very trendy in recent years, given that it affects countries across the Globe. Small Wars Journal defines it as “the mechanism of the confrontation with the state that results when the relationships between organized crime and the state fall into disequilibrium.” It differs from traditional conventional terrorism and insurgency as the prime political motivation of criminal groups is for autonomy and economic control over a region to ensure freedom of movement for its criminal activities. Governments have also come to realize it’s hard to counter with their usual toolkits. The U.S. military is becoming more interested in this topic and in building partner capacity, given its implications in national security and urban warfare. Likewise, our partners both in the Americas and Africa live the reality every day of criminal groups using violence, corruption, and information operations to promote their goals. https://nesa-center.org/nesa-africom-transnational-threats-criminal-insurgency-online-round-table/

Nesa-Africom Transnational Threats: Criminal Insurgency Online Round Table
26 October 2022

Speakers from left: Anne Moisan (Professor, NESA Center) and Dr. Christian Vianna de Azevedo (Special Agent, Brazilian Federal Police).
Perceptions of the Indo-Pacific – Views from the NESA Region

In August 2022, the NESA Center distributed a survey to its alumni network with a range of questions formulated around U.S. policy towards the Indo-Pacific and how that impacts the countries of the NESA region. The survey also sought to measure attitudes about Chinese engagement in the Indo-Pacific and NESA regions. The survey contained a set of eight questions and was translated into Arabic, Dari, French, and Russian for full accessibility. Nearly 350 responses from more than 45 countries were received. Insights from these responses have been communicated to the leadership of the United States Department of Defense and throughout the United States Government and will help to shape NESA Center program curricula in the years to come. This is the fifth survey sent to NESA Center Alumni under the COVID-19 pandemic work environment. The findings of the survey have been compiled into the following report and the results are accompanied by graphs for visual aid. [https://nesa-center.org/perceptions-of-the-indo-pacific-views-from-the-nesa-region/](https://nesa-center.org/perceptions-of-the-indo-pacific-views-from-the-nesa-region/)
Senior Executive Seminar: Climate Change & Security

From 14–18 November 2022, the Near East South Asia Center (NESA) hosted a Senior Executive Seminar (SES) titled “Climate Change and Security.” The seminar started with a welcome and introduction from Course Director Dr. Gawdat Bahgat and then a welcome from Acting Director COL David Lamm, USA (Ret.) and Academic Dean Dr. Roger Kangas.

The five-day virtual seminar focused on a range of topics, including the science of climate change, the security challenges that climate change poses in the NESA region, as well as what countries can do to address these security challenges. The group also discussed issues such as the global demand for fossil fuels and the effects of the war in Ukraine. There were eleven sessions that featured prominent guest speakers, followed by Q&A sessions with the participants, held under Chatham House Rule. The discussions were moderated by Dr. Gawdat Bahgat, Dr. Hassan Abbas, and Assistant Professor Jeffrey Payne. The SES engaged with 50 participants from 21 countries. [https://nesa-center.org/senior-executive-seminar-climate-change-security/](https://nesa-center.org/senior-executive-seminar-climate-change-security/)

Speakers starting from the top left: Dr. Gawdat Bahgat (Course Director, NESA Center), Dr. Roger Kangas (Academic Dean, NESA Center), COL David Lamm, USA (Ret.) (Acting Director, NESA Center), Dr. Hassan Abbas (Distinguished Professor, NESA Center), Jeffrey Payne (Assistant Professor, NESA Center), Morgan Higman (Fellow, Energy Security and Climate Change Program). [Click here to read full caption.](#)
The Pakistan Conference: 75 Years Of Independence

From 29–30 November 2022, the Lakshmi Mittal and Family South Asia Institute at Harvard hosted a conference titled “The Pakistan Conference: 75 Years of Independence” in Cambridge, MA, co-sponsored by the Near East South Asia (NESA) Center for Strategic Studies and the American Institute of Pakistan Studies (AIPS). The conference featured panel discussions with talks by U.S., Pakistani, and other international scholars on key political and security issues. The first day of the conference started with panel discussion topics, The Intellectual Inheritance, The Long Shadow of the 1947 Partition and State Building, Internal Security: Policing, Geopolitics, and Countering Violent Extremism, From the ‘Peripheries,’ and Religion and Society. NESA Center Associate Professor Gill chaired the third panel that focused on Internal Security: Policing, Geopolitics, and Countering Violent Extremism. NESA Center Distinguished Professor of International Relations Dr. Hassan Abbas spoke on the panel regarding “Countering Extremist Narratives in Pakistan.” The second and final day had panel topics on Postcolonial Predicaments, Reimagining Education, Pakistan’s Political Parties, and Media and Its Discontents. 

https://nesa-center.org/the-pakistan-conference-75-years-of-independence/
The 6th Great Power Competition Conference

On 8 December 2022, the University of South Florida (USF), in collaboration with the Near East South Asia (NESA) Center for Strategic Studies, held the 6th Great Power Competition (GPC) Conference titled “Russia’s Invasion of Ukraine: Implications for the Central Region.”

This conference belongs to a series of seminars that focus on Great Power Competition in the Central Region (CENTCOM AOR) and take place twice a year at the University of South Florida. The series provide a broader understanding of the challenges facing the United States in the 21st Century. The forum focused on threats and challenges confronting U.S. national security and policy, particularly in the Central Region, due to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

https://nesa-center.org/the-6th-great-power-competition-conference/

Image of Panel 1: Understanding Russia’s Strategy in the Central Region (Middle East and Central Asia) Post-Ukraine Invasion.
Executive Seminar: Strategic Power Competition in a Multipolar World

From 5–16 December 2022, the NESA Center hosted an Executive Seminar (ES) titled “Strategic Power Competition in a Multipolar World.” The virtual seminar’s focus on strategic power competition helped define what “global power” and “competition” mean. It also identified challenges the U.S. faces in this new era of competition, especially from Russia and China and from non-state actors and violent extremist organizations. The conference included presentations by scholars and practitioners on strategic power competition topics such as the war on terrorism, the military, professional military education (PME), pandemics and the global economy, and maritime security. Other topics included competition in the arctic region, weaponizing and disinformation, and competition in space, as well as case studies on China, Russia, Iran, and Turkey (Türkiye). Course Director Dr. Michael Sharnoff and his colleagues, NESA Center Professors Ali Jalali and Dan Curfiss, moderated the sessions. After each presentation, about 30-45 mins was reserved for moderated discussion that was off-the-record (under Chatham House rules of non-attribution), where participants were encouraged to openly contribute to the discussion. The ES seminar was an excellent opportunity for professionals from the region to listen, engage, debate, question, and discuss what these competitive dynamics mean for them. Fifty participants from twenty-one countries joined the seminar. https://nesa-center.org/executive-seminar-strategic-power-competition/

Speakers starting from the left: Dr. Michael Sharnoff (Course Director and Professor, NESA Center), Dr. Roger Kangas (Academic Dean, NESA Center), COL (Ret.) David Lamm (Deputy Director, NESA Center), Amb. Ali Jalali (Distinguished Professor – Click to read full caption.  

https://nesa-center.org/executive-seminar-strategic-power-competition/
Uzbekistan Group Meetings

From 12–16 December 2022, the NESA Center team of Dean Dr. Roger Kangas, Distinguished Professor Dr. Hassan Abbas, and Research Assistant Michelle Hanssen visited Tashkent, Uzbekistan to hold a series of meetings and visits that focused on reconnecting with Uzbek partners after the Covid-19 hiatus. With particular emphasis on the Strategic Studies Network Central Asia Working Group, this was a chance to exchange ideas on both thematic and organizational matters. The former tended to concentrate on the situation in Afghanistan, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, U.S. policy towards Central Asia, as well as reforms underway in Uzbekistan that offer more opportunities for U.S.-Uzbek cooperation. The latter focused on the way ahead – how and when the NESA Center can once again conduct programs in Uzbekistan (and in Central Asia, as a whole). Official meetings included visits to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Armed Forces Academy of the Ministry of Defense of Uzbekistan, the Ministry of Interior Academy, the Institute of Strategic and Regional Studies, the independent think tank “Knowledge Caravan,” the University of World Economy and Diplomacy (to include its newly established research center), among others. The NESA team also met with officials from the U.S. Embassy, as well as held a small meeting of the Embassy’s Public Affairs Office outreach to U.S. government program alumni. In almost every meeting, NESA Center program alumni were present, affording us a chance to reconnect with them. [https://nesa-center.org/uzbekistan-group-meetings/](https://nesa-center.org/uzbekistan-group-meetings/)
On 14 December 2022, the NESA Center professional military education (PME) team met with leadership and the directing staff from the Royal Jordanian National Defense College (RJNDC) on their campus outside Amman, Jordan. During the meeting, the team finished a draft memorandum of understanding and scheduled a series of engagement and education events for the remainder of the 22–23 Academic Year. Dean Charles Marks, Professor Richard Wiersema, and Outreach Coordinator and Alumni Coordinator Christopher Muller chaired a series of working meetings with the RJNDC staff and attended office calls with Commandant Brigadier Azzam al Rawaneh. The NESA team also met with leadership and faculty at the RJNDC’s Military Center for Counter-Terrorism and Extremism (MCCTE) on 15 December 2022. In coordination with the U.S. Military Assistance Program–Jordan, the combined team produced final versions of the memorandum of understanding and the collaboration schedule. NESA-led instruction, academic seminars, and faculty and curriculum development workshops with RJNDC will commence in January 2023.

Dr. Hassan Abbas

3 November 2022 – Interviewed and quoted by Grid News’ Tom Nagorski on the latest crisis in Pakistan titled “Pakistan was already on edge. Then came the assassination attempt on former prime minister Imran Khan.” https://www.grid.news/story/global/2022/11/03/pakistan-was-already-on-edge-then-came-the-assassination-attempt-on-former-prime-minister-imran-khan

9 November 2022 – Gave a presentation at the Harvard Islamic Society at Harvard University on “The Tragic Plight of the Hazara Under the Taliban Today.” The event aimed to shed light on the terrorist attacks that the Hazara communities of Afghanistan and Pakistan have been subject to over the years. https://shiism.hds.harvard.edu/event/tragic-plight-hazara-under-taliban-today

3 December 2022 – Spoke at the National Police Academy in Islamabad with about 40 in attendance. Addressed training police officers on the topic of “Modern Policing Challenges.”

Dr. Gawdat Bahgat

16 October 2022 – Published a journal ORIENT IV 2022: Global Geopolitics echoing into the MENA Region, titled “Global Power Competition and the Geopolitics of Energy.” Professor Bahgat focuses on how the competition between global powers (i.e., the United States, Europe, Russia, and China) has intensified and expanded to cover a broad range of challenges, including security, economics, and information technology. https://orient-online.com/orient-iv-2022-global-geopolitics-echoing-into-the-mena-region

3 November 2022 – Spoke on making the Middle East a nuclear weapons-free zone at the “Nuclear Forum” in Amman, Jordan, sponsored by the Arab Institute for Security Studies (AISS). About 150 participants from around the world attended, including several current and former ambassadors. Agenda: http://acsis.org/meetings/nuclear-2022/Meeting%20Program%20-%202022.pdf Photos: https://www.flickr.com/photos/151821662@N04/

6 December 2022 – Participated in track II talks on the Abraham Accords for the “N7 Conference: Education &
Coexistence” in Rabat, Morocco. The conference was held from 4–7 December 2022 and was organized as part of the Atlantic Council and the Jeffrey M. Talpins Foundation N7 initiative. https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/event/n7-conference-education-coexistence

David Des Roches

11 November 2022 – Spoke on a panel titled “Session 1 - Regional Security Cooperation: Addressing Common Threats and Challenges” during this year’s “UAE Security Forum” brought to you by The Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington. Professor Des Roches assessed regional geopolitical trends, advanced a common vision for strengthening security cooperation, and recognized the linkages and advantages of integration among countries in the regions of the Gulf, Levant, and Red Sea. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=artBoTVg_iU

13 November 2022 – Spoke on a panel at the Washington Center for Yemeni Studies’ first annual conference titled, “Regional Security and Armed Groups | WCYS Annual Conference ‘22 - Yemen Under the Scope.” The Washington Center for Yemeni Studies is a two-year-old think tank run with the support of the Yemeni government. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=70V2WXJtBQ


John H. Gill

5 October 2022 – Participated in a roundtable discussion regarding India in the Indo-Pacific hosted by the National Defense University’s Center for the Study of WMD.

Ali Ahmad Jalali

3 October 2022 – Was interviewed by VOA TV for comments on a series of attacks on minorities in Afghanistan.

4 November 2022 – Addressed a group of senior class students visiting from the College of William and Mary for a briefing on Afghanistan as they studied the country in their fall semester.

1 December 2022 – Was interviewed by the Voice of America and RFE/RL on the consequences of the Taliban banning the two U.S.-funded radio stations in Afghanistan. In its intensified campaign to crack down on independent media, the Taliban-ruled Afghanistan blocked transmissions by two news radio stations, Voice of America (VOA) and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), funded by the U.S. government. The two 24-hour news stations operated for many years within Afghanistan, even after Taliban forces took power in August 2021. The ban affects FM broadcasts by the Voice of America in 13
of the country’s 34 provinces and suspended nationwide broadcasts by Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, which is known as Radio Azadi. Radio remains a crucial source of information and news in Afghanistan, a country where millions of people live in poor rural villages and illiteracy remains high. The crackdown drew immediate protests from officials at the U.S. Agency for Global Media, which oversees both channels, as well as from international human rights organizations.

Roger Kangas

18-20 November 2022 – Dean Roger Kangas and Associate Professor David Des Roches attended the 18th Annual Manama Dialogue, hosted by the U.K. think tank, the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS). The event took place in Manama, Bahrain. It brought together over 400 policy experts and government officials from the Middle East and beyond to discuss themes under the broad heading of ‘Rules and Competition in the Middle East.’ Specific issues such as the consequences of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the challenges of climate change, and maritime security were addressed in the panel discussions. Dean Kangas and Professor Des Roches had opportunities to engage with several NESA Center alumni who attended the event on behalf of their countries. [Link]

Charles Marks

2–3 November 2022 – Associate Dean Charles Marks, Professor Richard Wiersema, and Army War College Fellow Colonel Louis Kangas attended the U.S.-Arab Policy Maker’s Conference hosted by the Council on U.S.-Arab Relations. Conducted sidebar discussions with critical members of the Department of State, and country teams from Jordan, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Pakistan, and the UAE.

Jeffrey Payne

25 October 2022 – Had a consultation with the Defense Innovation Unit in Pentagon City regarding Maritime Domain Awareness and Artificial Intelligence. The purpose was to better integrate technological innovations in security cooperation into NESA Center programming.

31 October 2022 – Discussed forthcoming NESA Center programs with CENTCOM’s new Chief Technology Officer, Schuyler Moore. There was an emphasis on how the NESA Center can facilitate partner/ally gatherings to discuss emerging commercial technologies as a means of furthering maritime security.

22 November 2022 – Attended an IISS digital event focused on South Asia Security. One panel focused on overall security trends, and the second on maritime topics. Seventeen participants were a part of the event, including Dean Roger Kangas. Speakers included British and Chinese scholars.

23–25 November 2022 – Served as a delegate at the Indian Navy and the National Maritime Foundation’s Indo-Pacific Review Dialogue. Speakers included the Indian Naval Chief, the Indian Minister of Defence, the U.S. Defense Attache, and other dignitaries. Professor Payne spoke in Professional Session 2 on ways to bridge the Indian and Pacific Oceans. The event was held at the Manekshaw Centre in Delhi, and approximately 750 took part. [Link]

Michael Sharnoff

5–7 November 2022 – Moderated a panel on Jordan titled “Jordan Before and After 1967” for the Association for
the Study of the Middle East and Africa’s Fifteenth Annual Conference in Washington, D.C. [https://www.asmeascholars.org/fifteenth-annual-asmea-conference]

Brianne Todd

8 November 2022 – In addition to currently being detailed to the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Assistant Professor Brianne Todd continues to lead seminars and re-engage alumni, including meeting with Ambassador Jav-}

NESA Faculty & Staff Engagement

lon Vakhabov (Uzbekistan’s Ambassador to the United States, Canada, and Brazil) at the Embassy of Uzbekistan in Washington, D.C.

NESA Alumni Activities & Contributions

14 October 2022 – Antonia Dimou (Greece) published an analysis, “Greece Locks the East Mediterranean into a European Energy Strategy,” for Modern Diplomacy.


31 October 2022 – Dr. Eman Ragab (Egypt) gave a presentation, “Role of Media in Countering Terrorism and Extremism in the Era of Social Media Outlets” for the Islamic Military Counter-Terrorism Coalition (IMCTC).


22 November 2022 – Dr. Arslan Chikhaoui (Algeria) published an article, “L’Algérie au centre de la politique africaine des Etats Unis à l’Ere d’une nouvelle dynamique géopolitique (Analyse),” on the NESA Center website.

29 November 2022 – Dr. Eman Ragab (Egypt) published an op-ed, “Europe’s Security Future,” for Ahram Online.

01 December 2022 – Dr. Arslan Chikhaoui (Algeria) published an article: “L’Algérie est en faveur d’une zone exempte d’armes de destruction massive dans la région,” on the NESA Center website.


Visit the NESA Center Alumni Interactive Map: [https://nesa-center.org/alumni-map/]
NESA Upcoming Events

SWC Electives: Military Strategy | 22–26 January 2023 | Saudi Arabia
CENTCOM IMOF | 23–27 January 2023 | Washington D.C.
Oman C-UAS | 23–25 January 2023 | Muscat
Washington Seminar A | 26 January 2023 | Washington D.C.
SANDU Faculty Development Workshop | 29 January–4 February 2023 | Saudi Arabia
Executive Seminar (ES) 02-23 | 30 January–10 February 2023 | Virtual
Saudi MOD Peacekeeping Seminar (T) | 5–8 February 2023 | Saudi Arabia
SWC Electives: JOPC w/ Doctrine and LOAC | 19 February–3 March 2023 | Saudi Arabia
CT-Senior Executive Seminar (CT-SES) 02-23 | 27 February–3 March 2023 | Washington D.C.

Visit www.NESA-Center.org for additional information.
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