

Afghan Women Leaders Roundtable



Afghan women reformers take a photo with NESAs Deputy Director Lamm and Ambassador Mohib.

WASHINGTON—February 15, 2018—The NESAs Center had the honor of hosting a roundtable dedicated to the ‘New Generation of Afghan Women Leaders Driving Reform for Progress and Security’, in partnership with the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the U.S.–Afghan Women’s Council.

The meeting showcased a number of passionate Afghan women who hold leadership positions in various government offices including Adela Raz, Deputy Minister for Economic Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Naheed Sarabi, Deputy Minister for Policy at the Ministry of Finance, Shaharzarad Akbar, Senior Adviser to the President on High Councils, Naheed Esar, Director of Policy and Analysis for the Administrative Office of the President, Ghizaal Haress, Commissioner for the Independent Commission for Overseeing the Implementation of the Constitution, Dr. Zohra Nawabi, Member of the Provincial Council of Kabul province, and Muqaddessa Yourish, Appointment Board Commissioner for the Independent Administrative Reforms and Civil Service Commission.

These seven female leaders deal with fiscal and development agendas, anti-corruption efforts, judicial reforms, regional connectivity, and the implementation of a rigorous reform agenda for Afghanistan.

The delegation had the chance to meet and express their views with NESAs Deputy Director David Lamm and Assistant Professor Lt Col Jodi Bonnes about Afghanistan’s fiscal and



A robust, group panel discussion between the Afghan women reformers, Ambassador Mohib, and NESAs faculty.

development reform agenda, specifically emphasizing the unemployment rate and service delivery. Also in attendance were the Afghan Ambassador to the U.S., H.E. Dr. Hamdullah Mohib, as well as several NESAs faculty members and other U.S. government representatives.

Also discussed were necessary conditions for successful reform in Afghanistan starting with changes in education, the fight against corruption and patronage, as well as the political willingness and support needed to holistically change the current system.

The NESAs Center is proud to sustain its cooperation with Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and to continue hosting roundtables that empower gender diversity and launch forward a new generation of female leaders across the region.

Building Relationships– Enhancing Security

NESA Roundtable With Qatar Minister for Defense Affairs



Qatari Minister of State for Defense Affairs, H.E. Al Attiyah (C), gives his remarks.

WASHINGTON-February 1, 2018-The NESACenter welcomed Qatari Minister of State for Defense Affairs, H.E. Dr. Khalid bin Mohammad Al Attiyah, for a roundtable discussion led by NESACenter Deputy Director David Lamm.

H.E. Al Attiyah was joined by two of his colleagues, Staff Brigadier General Yousef Mohammed Alkuwari and Lieutenant Colonel Nawaf Bin Mubarak Al-Thani. Additional members of the panel included National Defense University (NDU) Senior Vice President, Ambassador Michael Hammer, and Former Deputy Chief of Mission to Qatar, Mr. William Grant.

Prior to attending the NESACenter's roundtable discussion, H.E. Al Attiyah attended meetings with both U.S. Secretary of Defense James Mattis and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson as part of the inaugural Strategic Dialogue between the U.S. and Qatar. The Strategic Dialogue establishes the way forward for both countries to increase bilateral cooperation while maintaining a shared vision for the security and stability of the Gulf region.



An engaging discussion between the Qatari delegation and members of the audience.

H.E. Al Attiyah emphasized Qatar's continued role as a strong and reliable partner in a region often plagued with instability. He noted Qatar's willingness to work with outside actors, namely the United States, to help alleviate ongoing security concerns in and around the Persian Gulf. H.E. Al Attiyah stated that although external forces continue to threaten Qatar's sovereignty, the nation has stayed strong and hopes to work with its allies around the world to alleviate ongoing threats facing their nation.

When asked about his thoughts on future stability in the region, H.E. Al Attiyah appeared hopeful, stating that Qatar will remain committed to improving regional dialogue and ensuring a more stable relationship with outside states.

Several members of the NDU faculty and staff, as well as think-tank researchers attended the discussion, along with distinguished members of Qatar's Armed Forces, the Embassy of Qatar in the United States, and Qatar's Office of the Prime Minister. The NESACenter remains committed to hearing diverse perspectives from the region and is honored to have had H.E. Al Attiyah speak to our audience.

Building Relationships– Enhancing Security

Iraqi National Security Council Seminar



Iraqi and American participants listen to Mr. Michael Singh, during his panel discussion.

WASHINGTON- January 29-February 2, 2018- The NESA Center completed its first ever Iraqi Office of National Security Council Strategic Planning Seminar. Led by Professor Daniel Curfiss, the seminar provided an opportunity for senior Iraqi officials serving on Iraq's National Security Council to engage with NESA Center and U.S. officials in an effort to strengthen and diversify their national security directorate.

13 Iraqi officials, 9 American military and civilian advisors working with the U.S. mission in Baghdad, as



Participants, networking during a break in sessions.

well as a representative from the NATO office in Iraq attended the one-week seminar. Participants heard a variety of presentations related to national security doctrine, such as a national intelligence overview, considerations for constructing a national strategic plan, the U.S. national security process, as well as NSC staff functions and policy-making.

Subject matter experts Dr. Paul Pillar, Researcher and Core Faculty Member of the Security Studies Program at Georgetown University and Mr. Michael Singh, Lang-Swig Senior Fellow and Managing Director of the Washington Institute presented to participants as well. Professor Curfiss also incorporated

roundtable discussions with senior Pentagon officials as well as meetings with U.S. National Security Council staff, in order for participants to truly understand the decision making process for the central elements of a successful national security plan.

Faculty Publications

Bahgat, Gawdat. 2018. "Sovereign Wealth Funds in the Persian Gulf." Oxford University Press Handbook on Sovereign Wealth Funds.

Des Roches, David, Lenderking, Cammack, and Shihabi. 2018. "The GCC Rift: Regional and Global Implications." Middle East Policy. Vol 24, 4, pp. 5-28.

Building Relationships– Enhancing Security



Afghanistan-Pakistan Confidence Building Seminar



A participant makes a comment, during an engaging session on refugees and migration.

WASHINGTON- January 22-February 2, 2018- Continuing a unique dialogue started by the NESA Center, Professor John Wood led the first Afghanistan-Pakistan Confidence Building Seminar of 2018. 15 senior military and government officials from Afghanistan and Pakistan as well as an American representative attended the two-week seminar which focused on initiating a conversation to soften relations between the two countries.

Held twice each year, this seminar provides the rare opportunity for Afghans and Pakistanis to mutually cooperate and set a precedence for confidence building while under the guidance of Chatham House rules of non-attribution.

Participants were able to hear from prominent Middle East and South Asia experts on topics such as narcotics and narco-trafficking, Indian policies in the region, refugees and migration, customs and border security, as well as Russia's influence in Central Asia.

Professor Wood also provided participants with several opportunities to have roundtable discussions with senior officials at the Pentagon, State Department, and Capitol Hill. Participants also heard striking presentations from policymakers and subject matter experts such as Ambassador John W. Limbert, U.S. Naval Academy, Mr. Vikram Singh, Center for American Progress, and Mr. Michael Fisher, Former Chief, U.S. Border Patrol.

As part of their engagement in the course, participants were divided into two teams combining both Afghan and Pakistani officials, and were tasked with completing a white paper exercise focusing on border security. Each team presented their findings and solutions on their final day to a panel consisting of NESA faculty as well as senior officials and defense representatives from both the Afghan and Pakistani Embassies in D.C.



An Afghan and Pakistani conversing during a designated break.

Upcoming NESA Center Events

NESA Executive Seminar
March 5-March 16

**UAE Command and Staff
College Visit**
12-17

Saudi War College Visit
March 19-23

Tunisia NDI Seminar
March 26-April 4

Building Relationships– Enhancing Security

NESA Senior Executive Seminar (SES)



NESA SES participants take a group photo outside of the National Defense University.

WASHINGTON—February 5-9, 2018— As part of its foundation program series, the NESA Center held its bi-annual Senior Executive Seminar (SES). The SES is designed for senior military and government officials from countries throughout the NESA region.

Over 41 participants from 22 NESA countries and the U.S. attended the one-week seminar led by NESA Professor Dr. Richard Russell. This SES, the first one for the 2018 Fiscal Year (FY), focused on ‘Policy and Strategy in World Conflicts’ and provided a cursory overview for the Middle East and North Africa as well as South and Central Asia.



Participants exchanging thoughts during a break.

Participants gained an understanding of a variety of topics related to international security including strategy from the Washington D.C. perspective, the principal approach to fighting Daesh, strategies that Iraq, Iran, and Turkey take towards conflicts in their region, as well as anticipating future policy based on regional conflicts and trends. Participants were also split into three separate breakout groups to delve into further analysis under the guidance of NESA Center faculty.

Dr. Russell and NESA Center faculty as well as subject matter experts such as Dr. Soner

Cagaptay, Beyer Family Fellow and Director of the Turkish Research Program at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Dr. Kenneth Pollack, Resident Scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, and Dr. Eric Trager, Professional Staff Member for the Middle East and North Africa at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee presented their analysis and trends on current strategy in NESA region conflicts.

Dr. Russell also arranged for participants to conduct an off-site at the U.S. House of Representatives and hear directly from committee and defense legislative staffers.

Building Relationships— Enhancing Security

Nepal Strategic Forum



Participants take a group photo, at the Nepal Strategic Forum in Kathmandu.

KATHMANDU, Nepal- January 31-February 1, 2018- The Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies in cooperation with the Centre for South Asian Studies and the Daniel K. Inouye Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies, hosted a Strategic Forum entitled “Crisis Response in South Asia.” The seminar was held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Kathmandu.

The forum brought together 19 participants from throughout South Asia to discuss crisis response methodologies and best practices. The seminar was inaugurated by the SAARC Secretary General, Mr. Amjad Hussain B. Sial.

The NESA Center along with the Daniel K. Inouye Asia Pacific Center for Strategic Studies (APCSS), also co-hosted a Nepal alumni event in Kathmandu for 80+ alums. The Nepal Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) General Rajendra Chhetri as well as the U.S. Embassy Chargé de Affairs Michael C. Gonzales, attended the event. NESA Distinguished Professor of Practice Manpreet Singh Anand provided welcome remarks on behalf of NESA Director, LTG (ret.) Terry Wolff. Following his remarks, alumni and faculty stayed for a networking reception.

Iran Defense Policy Seminar



Dr. Walsh (L), Lieutenant General Brown, and Dr. Bahgat take a photo together.

TAMPA, Florida– January 29-February 1, 2018– The NESA Center held a one-week seminar for senior military officers from U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM). The list of speakers included Dr. Gawdat Bahgat, NESA Center, Dr. James Walsh, MIT, Dr. Ariane Tabatabai, Georgetown University, and Barbara Slavin, Atlantic Council. Deputy Commander of CENTCOM, Lieutenant General Charles Brown, attended a crucial national security session as well. The speakers addressed Iran's naval forces, cyberwarfare capabilities, missile and nuclear programs.

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NESA-Uzbekistan Dialog and Roundtable



NESA Roundtable held at the Embassy of Uzbekistan, D.C., led by NESA Professor Brianne Todd.

WASHINGTON- February 27, 2018- The NESA Center held a roundtable discussion with Uzbekistan’s Ambassador, H.E. Javlon Vakhobov, and his guests, Ambassador Vladimir Norov and Mr. Bakhtiyor Mustafaev from Uzbekistan’s Institute for Strategic and Inter-Regional Studies. NESA Academic Dean Dr. Roger Kangas and faculty including Brianne Todd, Dr. Jennifer Jefferis, and Lt Col Jodi Bonnes attended the discussion at the Embassy of Uzbekistan in Washington.

The discussion highlighted the Uzbek-American partnership and the increasing academic relationship between think-tanks in both countries. NESA faculty also emphasized the need to collaborate more towards common interests in Central Asia.

NESA Center Roundtable With Stimson Center South Asia



WASHINGTON– February 5, 2018– NESA Professors (L to R) Brianne Todd, John Wood, and Jack Gill spoke to the Stimson Center’s South Asian Visiting Fellows on U.S. relations with Afghanistan, Pakistan, and other regional actors.

Building Relationships– Enhancing Security

Saudi Arabian War College Faculty Development Seminar



NESA Professor DesRoches and members of the Saudi Arabian War College take a group photo.

WASHINGTON- February 26-27, 2018- The NESA Center was honored to host the head of the War Wing of the Saudi War Course as well as several Department Chairmen from the Saudi Arabian War College for a faculty development workshop.

During the program Saudi military educators met with NESA Center faculty, led by Professor David DesRoches, as well as with academic counterparts from National Defense University (NDU) colleges and components including the Eisenhower School for National Security and Resource Strategy, the College of International Security Affairs, the National War College, the CAPSTONE General and Flag Officer Course, as well as the NDU Library.

The delegation also had detailed discussions on military academic instruction and accreditation with NESA Center senior leadership and faculty.

NESA Roundtable With LTG Eric P. Wendt



WASHINGTON– February 16, 2018- U.S. Security Coordinator for Israel and the Palestinian Authority, Jerusalem, LTG Eric P. Wendt (R), met with NESA Center faculty led by Professor Dr. Jennifer Jefferis.

Building Relationships– Enhancing Security

NESA- AFRICOM NDI Meeting



Tunisian alumni networking during their reception in Tunis, February 1, 2018.

TUNIS, Tunisia- February 1, 2018– Professors Anne Moisan, the NESA Center, and John Chere, Defense Institute of Security Cooperation Studies, lectured at the Tunisian National Defense Institute (NDI). Supporting the Class of 2018’s theme of “Innovation and the Establishing a National Defense Industry”, their presentations focused on economic challenges in Tunisia, international perceptions of Tunisian progress, and the pros and cons of establishing a more robust defense industry as the centerpiece of economic growth in Tunisia.

The NDI is in its 35th year and 2018 represents NESA-AFRICOM’s 7th year of collaboration. This lecture series and its subsequent Working Group sessions represent Phase 1 of a two part annual program. Phase II will be conducted in Washington D.C. with a Security Seminar on March 26 – April 3, 2018. There will be 45 participants, including 2 faculty members and the Director of the NDI. The class is made up of 50% security forces and 50% civilian ministries, with 4 parliamentarians. In the evening NESA conducted an NDI Alumni event coordinated by Mr. Fahad Malaikah, NESA Alumni Manager.

Professor David DesRoches Speaks on GCC Cooperation



DOHA, Qatar– December 2-4, 2017- NESA Professor David DesRoches (R) spoke on GCC Military Cooperation at The Fourth Annual Gulf Studies Forum, sponsored by the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, in Doha.

Building Relationships– Enhancing Security

NESA- AFRICOM Workshop on Returning Fighters



Participants engaging in a dialogue during the one-week course in Tunis.

TUNIS, Tunisia– February 5-9, 2018- The Near East South Asia (NESACenter) Center for Strategic Studies in partnership with U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) conducted a “Returning Fighters and Reintegration in North Africa and the Sahel” workshop.

The focus of the NESA-AFRICOM workshop was on the regional impact of returning fighters after the defeat of ISIS in Syria-Iraq, as well as defections from Boko Haram, AQIM and Al-Shabaab. Most importantly the group analyzed various reintegration programs, experiences and lessons learned from Sri Lanka, North Africa and the Sahel.

Numerous initiatives and national programs to evaluate and assess returnees were considered as even more “hard” and “soft” programs aimed at de-radicalization and reintegration of “reconcilables” back into society as contributing citizens.

The workshop was a follow-on engagement to the “Radicalization in the Levant, North Africa and South Asia Workshop” held February 14-16, 2017 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. A variety of related sub-topics were also discussed during the workshop in Sri Lanka: youth as a target of continued recruitment; de-radicalization and “alternative” narratives; community approaches partnering Government and Civil Society; governance and corruption; as well as the resulting security implications.

Each topic was introduced by a speaker or panel made up of a participants with a NESA moderator and AFRICOM commentator. Participant presentations fed into the subsequent open discussions under Chatham House Rule.

Topics included: national challenges of returning fighters; addressing dislocated youth, continued radicalization, de-radicalization, refugees, and security. National initiatives were discussed such as: lessons learned post-Algerian revolution; Morocco’s comprehensive plan initiative; how Sri Lanka dealt with the Tamil Tigers post-civil war; Libya’s first attempt at reintegrating militias; and the Sahelian challenges with ISIS affiliated terrorist groups. Thirty-seven participants from Algeria, Burkina Faso, Chad, Egypt, Libya, Mali, Morocco, Sri Lanka, Tunisia, and the United States attended the event.

This workshop was led by NESA Professor Anne Moisan partnering with USAFRICOM’s Mr. Henry Kron, Foreign Affairs Specialist/Security Cooperation Advisor-Planner and CDR Abuhena “Saif” Saifulisiam, Deputy Command Chaplain and supported by Mr. Fahad Malaikah, NESA’s Program Manager.