



October 2018 Monthly Report

## NESA Region Trends

Non-traditional and emerging security threats permeated conversation throughout NESA's October programming. While most frequently recurring discussion topics focused on security implications of rapid technological advancements, other "non-traditional" threats discussed included political and socio-economic implications of climate change and Iran's destabilizing actions throughout the NESA region.

- **Royal Saudi Air Defense Forces Senior Officers' Seminar (page 2):** Throughout this unique program, a crucial conversation topic was participants' expressed desire to prevent Iran from further destabilizing the Arab world. Specifically, participants scrutinized developments in Iranian hybrid warfare and missile attack capabilities.
- **Promoting Socioeconomic Development in the MENA Region (page 3):** Participants heavily analyzed the dual-sided role of social media as a tool for increasing exposure—and its role as a path to violence and radicalization. Also discussed was the impact of climate change and drought on the economic and social health of NESA region states.
- **Executive Seminar : New Security Challenges (page 4):** Participants were keenly focused on new security threats, particularly cyber warfare and artificial intelligence (AI). Developing countries with limited or nascent technological capabilities were most interested in the processes and means to obtain AI and cyber capabilities in order to close the perceived gap with developed countries.
- Focusing on the changing definition of national security and emerging threats, the seminar included sessions on climate change, water, food, epidemics and global health, cyberwarfare, financial warfare, and artificial intelligence. The seminar culminated with a group exercise to construct the outlines of a new national security strategy for a fictional nation.
- **Global Threat Cooperation International IVLP Special Initiative (page 5):** Among other topics, discourse focused on the abuse of new technological platforms and products by violent non-state actors, including artificial intelligence, crypto-currency, social media, as well as the threat of bio-terrorism. Participants and speakers also discussed climate change and its linkages to state fragility and internal conflict.



## Royal Saudi Air Defense Forces Senior Officers' Seminar

12—15 October

**N**ESA 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 the National Defense University. This unique NESA– private sector partnership brings up to fifteen senior Saudi Air Defense Officers to the United States twice a year for discussions of current 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 out in Los Angeles, where NESA 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 the team toured the U.S. Capitol with former U.S. Representative Cliff Stearns, and met with key Senate Foreign Relations Committee staffers. The group also toured Washington landmarks, and 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.



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## Promoting Socioeconomic Development in the MENA Region

14—16 October

As part of its continuing series of Strategic Studies Network (SSN) sub-regional working groups and in partnership with the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed), NESAC held its fourth NESAC-IEMed workshop on “Promoting Socioeconomic Development in the MENA Region Workshop” 14-16 October 2018 in Tunis, Tunisia.

The Workshop’s focus was on the evolving nature of conflicts and regional challenges, linkages between social media and radicalization in the MENA (Middle East / North Africa) region, and the impact of poor governance and lack of civic activism. Participants also analyzed the increasingly negative impact of “non-traditional” security issues like climate change affecting water and food supply in the region. Behind many security issues lie shortcomings in domestic development and economic reform, which exacerbates the spread of radicalization. Workshop participants unanimously concluded that, to be truly effective, root causes must be addressed; specifically good governance, economic development and corruption.

Spanish Ambassador to Tunisia Ambassador Guillermo Ardizzone Garcia opened the workshop speaking on key subjects like the crisis of youth radicalization and EU initiatives for youth training and sustainable growth. IEMed’s Mr. Josep Ferre,

Acting General Director; Ms. Lurdes Vidal, Director, Arab World and Mediterranean Area,; and Mr. Roger Albinyana, Director, Mediterranean Regional Policies and Human Development moderated sessions along with NESAC Professor Anne Moisan and Mr. Osama Sghaier, Member of Parliament of the Republic of Tunisia. Panels were comprised of regional experts.

The workshop, attended by 31 participants attending from nine countries, was led by Professor Moisan and supported by Mr. Fahad Malaikah, Strategic Studies Network Program Manager, Alumni Coordinator and Overseas Program Coordinator. The Strategic Studies Network (SSN) is a unique initiative established by the NESAC Center in 2005. The SSN is a partnership of over seventy institutions from North Africa and the Middle East, South Asia, Central Asia, and Europe. For more information about the SSN and its work, visit: <http://strategicstudiesnetwork.org/>.



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# Executive Seminar: New Security Challenges

22 October—2 November

In this hyperconnected age, national security threats are assuming new, non-traditional identities. To address this precarious and emerging landscape, the NESACenter hosted the Executive Seminar, “New Security Challenges”, 22 October—2 November 2018. Professor John Wood acted as course director, with support from NESACenter faculty members Dr. Jennifer Jefferis, Dr. Gawdat Bahgat, and Professor Brianne Todd. The seminar hosted 38 participants from 22 different countries from North Africa, the Middle East, and Central and South Asia, all of whom work in positions of national security, and high-level military and ministerial offices.

Throughout the two-week seminar, participants engaged in lectures and discussions about key non-traditional national security threats impacting the NESACenter region, including climate change, transnational organized crime, population migration, water security, artificial intelligence, global health issues, food distribution, and cyberconflict. The seminar culminated with a group exercise, in which groups of participants implemented lessons from the Executive Seminar to craft a National Security Strategy for a different fictional country facing a unique critical threat.

Guest speakers included Dr. Jerome Glenn, co-founder and CEO of The Millennium Project; Dr. Shadi Hamid, senior fellow at the Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution; and Dr. Lynne Parker, Assistant Director for Artificial Intelligence at the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. Participants were also treated to a surprise book signing by guest speaker the *New York Times* correspondent David Sanger, who provided analysis on the emergence of cyber as a warfighting domain. The seminar included off-site visits to the U.S. National Archives and the U.S. Capitol, where a tour was led by former Congressman Dennis Hertel.



LTG (ref.) Wolff addresses participants at the ES Reception at the Army Navy Club



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# Global Threat Cooperation International IVLP Special Initiative

25—26 October



LTG (ret.) Terry Wolff

**A**s part of the U.S. State Department’s Global Threat Cooperation International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) Special Initiative, NESAC hosted a two-day seminar at the National Defense University 25—26 October, 2018. The seminar formed a key part of the three-week IVLP Global Threat Cooperation Special Initiative, held 22 October—9 November. The Global Threat Cooperation Special Initiative was designed in partnership with the Office of the Special Presidential Envoy for the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS to promote multilateral cooperation and information sharing among partner nations in addressing global security threats. The IVLP Initiative hosted approximately 100 political, security, and counterterrorism officials from around the world.

The NESAC-led discussions at NDU focused on the theme “The Future Holds New Challenges and New Opportunities”, and provided a forum for in-depth lectures and conversations about new and evolving security threats and the shared global fight to defeat violent extremism. The Initiative explored key topics such as the development of artificial intelligence and its abuse by violent non-state actors, the proliferation of crypto-currency and those implications for the fight to destroy terror groups’ illicit funding networks, climate change, and the threat of bio-terrorism.

Guest lecturers included Dr. Elizabeth Bodine-Baron, Director of the RAND Center for Applied Network Analysis and System Science; Mr. Jerome Glenn, Director of the Millennium Project; and NESAC Center Director LTG (ret.) Terry Wolff. LTG (ret.) Wolff, who also presently serves as the Deputy Presidential Envoy to the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL, provided insight on the Coalition’s progress as well as ISIS’ expanded use of social media in global recruitment and radicalization of vulnerable individuals. All lectures and discussions over the course of the two-day seminar were moderated by NESAC Professor Anne Moisan.

For more information about IVLP, the State Department’s premier professional exchange program, visit: <https://eca.state.gov/ivlp>.



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# faculty & alumni publications

## Select publications:

Professor David Des Roches, contributor. *The Arab Gulf States and the West: Perception and Realities - Opportunities and Perils*. Ed. Khatib, Dania Koleilat, and Marwa M. Maziad. Routledge, 2018.

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## nesa in the news

### Select media:

Professor David Des Roches, Carnegie Middle East Center, 4 October 2018. *Is Anyone Actually Winning the War in Yemen?* <<https://carnegie-mec.org/diwan/77389>>

Dr. Gawdat Bahgat, Voice of America, *Africa News Tonight*, 10 October, 2018. <<https://www.voanews.com/a/4587336.html>>

Professor David Des Roches, Bloomberg, 24 September 2018. *Lockheed's \$15 Billion Saudi Deal at Risk After Khashoggi Death*. <<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-10-24/lockheed-s-15-billion-saudi-deal-at-risk-after-khashoggi-death>>



additional information and images at:  
[www.nesa-center.org](http://www.nesa-center.org)



## contact us

### **Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies**

Abraham Lincoln Hall, Fort Lesley J. McNair

300 5th Ave SW

Washington, DC 20319-5066

Phone: (202) 685-4131      Fax: (202) 685-4999

### **Media Requests:**

#### **Media and Communications Office**

Phone: (202) 685-9467      [NESA-communications@ndu.edu](mailto:NESA-communications@ndu.edu)



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