



NESA Perspectives

Highlights of Faculty and Alumni Publications,
October 2018 - March 2019



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Building Relationships. Enhancing Security.

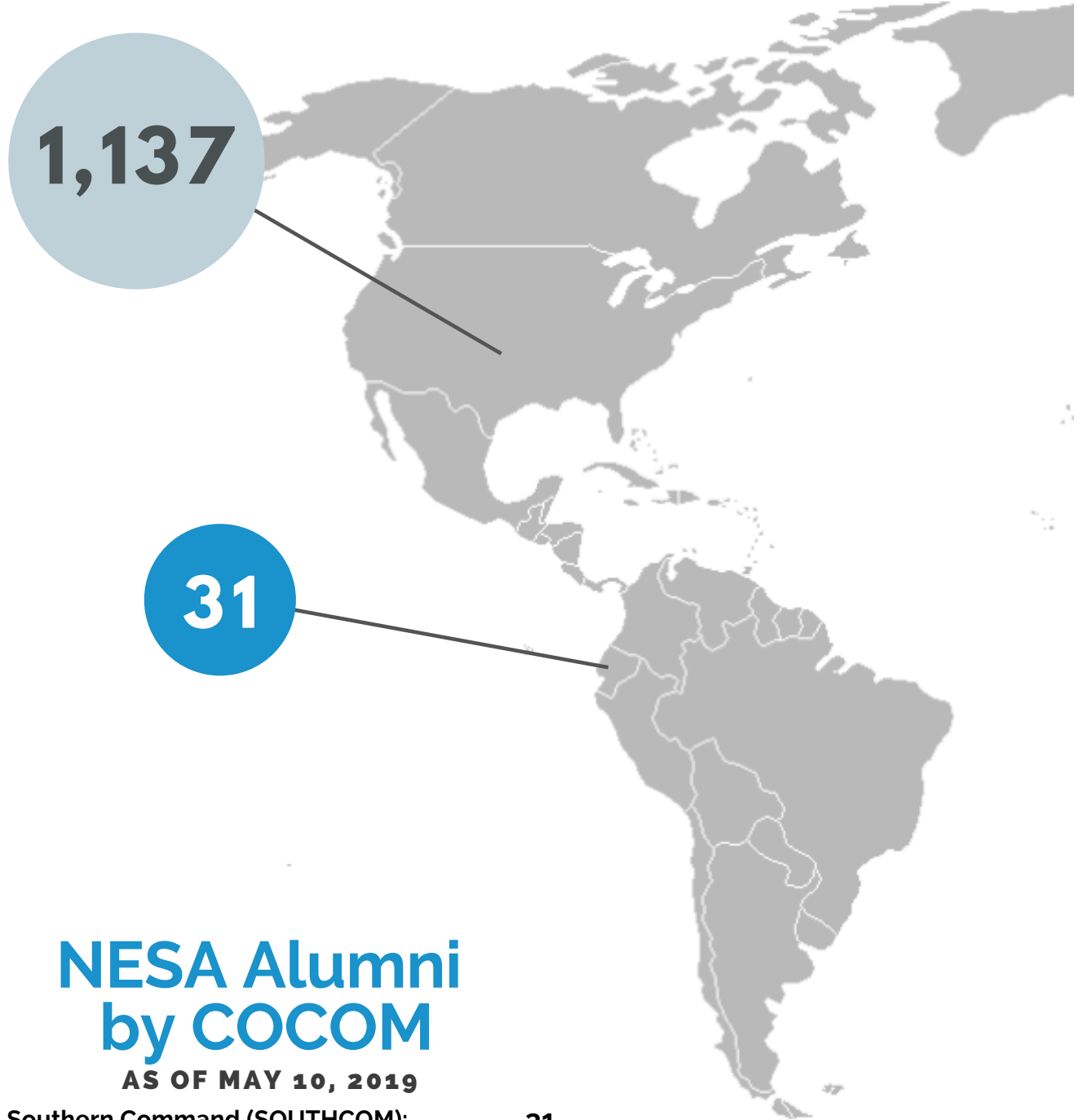
ABOUT THE NESA CENTER



Established in 2000 when the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) recognized the need for an organization dedicated to the challenging region extending from North Africa across the Arabian Peninsula and into South Asia, the NESA Center today is the preeminent DOD institution for building relationships with and understanding the NESA region. Based at the National Defense University, the NESA Center supports the theater security cooperation efforts of the U.S. combatant commands, U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM), U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM), U.S. European Command (USEUCOM), and U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (USPACOM). The NESA Center, one of five regional centers under the Defense Security Cooperation Agency, organizes specialized conferences, seminars, workshops, and Track II diplomatic efforts, with an alumni network consisting of over 9,300 security professionals from 120 nations.

Using the collaborative interests and knowledge of U.S. military organizations including the U.S. combatant commands and the Joint Staff, as well as in-region partners and our expansive alumni network, NESA's programs and Track II diplomacy forums provide critical spaces for U.S. and NESA region policymakers to engage address key regionally sensitive security and defense issues, from countering violent extremism and the issue of returning jihadi fighters, to border security, to humanitarian crises.

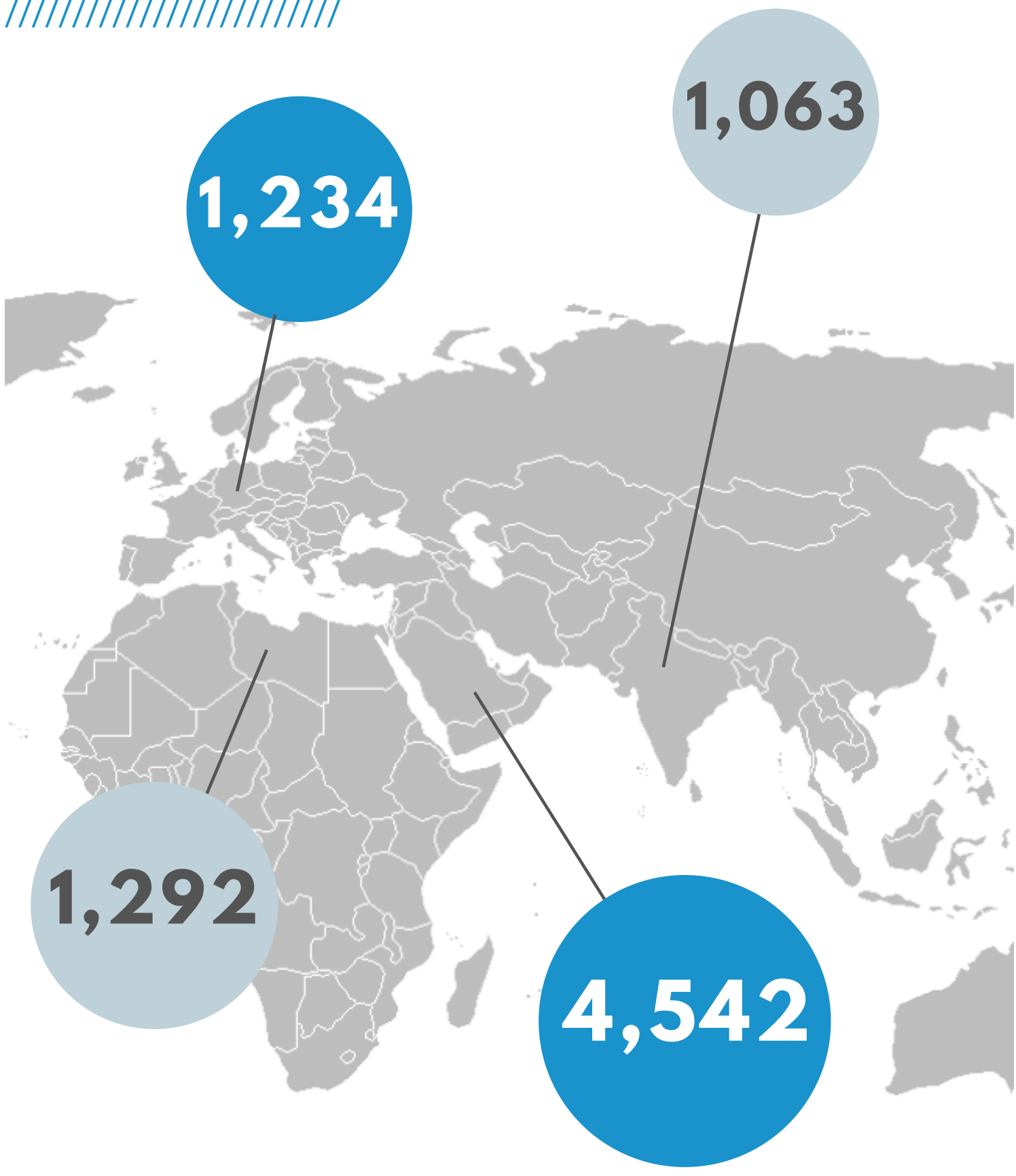
THE NESAS NETWORK'S Global Impact



NESA Alumni by COCOM

AS OF MAY 10, 2019

U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM):	31
U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM):	1,137



U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM):	1,292
U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM):	4,542
U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM):	1,063
U.S. European Command (EUCOM):	1,234

NESA PERSPECTIVES

The NESA Center boasts an expansive network of over 9,300 alumni from over 120 countries spanning the NESA region and beyond.

The diversity of NESA course participants—who include academics, rising changemakers, and international leaders and stakeholders in civil society and foreign and defense policy—provide a rich cross-fertilization of insights and lessons learned from different countries and regions. Throughout NESA programs, workshops, and Track II diplomacy forums, participants are constantly challenged by other ways of thinking and researching, while our D.C.-resident events and foundation seminars expose participants to American culture and democracy. NESA forums allow for Israeli-Arab, Indian-Pakistani, Algerian-Moroccan, intra-GCC, and other intra-regional interactions that many other forums and venues do not easily permit.

This inaugural issue of our new biannual publication *NESA Perspectives* features insights and analysis from some of the NESA Center faculty members who shape the Center’s programming, as well as from some of our exceptional alumni. Opinions expressed in the articles are the views of their respective authors, and do not imply endorsement by the NESA Center or the U.S. Department of Defense.

Faculty Publications

Excerpts of select NESAs faculty publications, October 2018 - March 2019

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Professor David Des Roches
- 07** "The Brewing War between Iran and Israel: Strategic Implications"
Dr Gawdat Bahgat
- 08** "Provocation, war and restraint under the nuclear shadow: The Kargil conflict 1999"
Professor John Gill
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Dr Gawdat Bahgat and Robert Mason

Alumni Publications

Excerpts of select NESAs alumni publications, October 2018 - March 2019

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"It Didn't JASTA Be This Way"

Professor David Des Roches

The passage of the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act (JASTA) is perhaps the greatest failure of Saudi lobbying in the long history of the United States-Saudi relations. The act allows individuals harmed by terrorist acts to take legal action in American courts against countries which may have sponsored terrorist individuals. While the plain language of the legislation does not specify any specific country, the discussion leading up to the passage of the act was exclusively about the role of Saudi Arabia in the 9/11 attacks in New York, Washington, and Pennsylvania.

The act allows American citizens to sue foreign governments with assets in America. It thus overrules the centuries-old doctrine of "sovereign immunity" which holds states (but not individuals) immune from lawsuits for national action.

The legislative history of the law is extraordinary: it is one of the few bills that President Obama vetoed, and the only veto that Congress overturned in his administration. The House of Representatives overwhelmingly supported the bill; only one Senator voted against it.

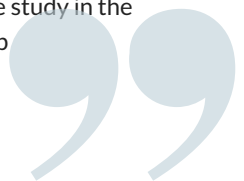
While the law requires a plaintiff to prove government complicity in order to seize assets, it should be noted that in the American system of legislation the process is effectively punishment—litigation is expensive and can drag on for years, and many choose to make a small payment to settle obviously for frivolous claims rather than pay more for litigation which may ultimately yield an expensive Pyrrhic victory. Saudi Arabia, which has extensive financial interests, in the United States, obviously fears this.

The passage of JASTA was an exception for three reasons. The first is that the law was opposed by a well-funded lobbying effort paid for by the Saudi government in Washington. This lobbying effort included many well-connected establishment figures, but ultimately proved to be ineffectual. The second reason was the entire United States government executive branch—to include the Departments

of State and Defense— was opposed to the passage of JASTA because of the implications to the United States of eroding sovereign immunity. President Obama's veto of JASTA was the only overridden veto of his presidency. The third exceptional circumstance was the opposition of United States veterans groups—normally one of the most powerful interest groups in American politics—again due to the erosion of sovereign immunity and the subsequent effect on Americans.

The passage of JASTA in the face of this opposition and the overwriting of the Presidential veto was indeed extraordinary. Weighing against this is the visceral and powerful political "victim" constituency—the relatives and heirs for the 9/11 attacks. This group stands almost alone with Holocaust survivors as one of the most unquestioned groups of victims, and thus is difficult to oppose in any public form.

In this [analysis] I will examine this situation as a case study in the use and limits of lobbying in Washington and develop recommendations for future practices.



"The Brewing War between Iran and Israel: Strategic Implications"

Dr. Gawdat Bahgat

“Since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, Iran and Israel have seen each other as sworn enemies. Iranian leaders do not recognize the Jewish state and refer to it as the "Zionist regime," while Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has been the world's most outspoken critic of Tehran's policies. Over the last four decades, the two sides have been engaged in a "low-intensity conflict." Iran has been accused of sponsoring terrorist attacks against Jewish/Israeli targets around the world. Israel is alleged to have assassinated several Iranian nuclear scientists and to have been the main force (along with the United States) behind the Stuxnet virus at Iran's nuclear facility in Natanz. [...] It is important to point out that this list of accusations is not exhaustive, and neither side has ever acknowledged carrying out any of these alleged attacks.

In the last few years, Syria has emerged as the main battleground of the Iranian-Israeli confrontation. For example, in late January 2015, an Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) general, Mohammad Ali Allah-Dadi, was killed in a suspected Israeli air strike in the Syrian Golan Heights. Since early 2018, the confrontation between Tehran and Jerusalem has significantly intensified. In February, an alleged Iranian drone was launched from T-4 air base east of Homs in central Syria. An Israeli Apache helicopter shot it down after it penetrated the country's air space. This limited operation quickly escalated when Israeli jets bombed several Iranian military positions, and an Israeli F-16 crashed after being hit by heavy anti-aircraft fire (the first downing of an Israeli plane in decades). Reacting to this development, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif stated that "Israel's so-called invincibility has been shattered." In turn, Prime Minister Netanyahu threatened, "We will act, if necessary, not only against Iranian proxies that are attacking us but against Iran itself."

Another attack by Israeli jets on Iranian bases and a command-and-control center was reported in April. Seven Iranian Quds Force members were killed, including Col. Mehdi Dehghan, who led the drone unit. Ali Akbar Velayati, the Iranian supreme leader's top aide for international affairs, warned that this attack "will not remain unanswered." Israeli Defense Minister Avigdor Liberman responded, "No matter what the price, we will not allow Iran to have a permanent military foothold in Syria." In May 2018, within hours from announcing the U.S. decision to withdraw from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action/nuclear deal (JCPOA), Israel launched the most intensive attack on Iranian positions in Syria since the beginning of the war in 2011. Responding allegedly to Iran's first rocket attack on its troops in the Golan Heights, Israeli jets attacked and destroyed dozens of Iranian targets, including weapons-storage facilities, logistics sites and intelligence centers used by the Quds Force.

Two conclusions can be drawn from this series of attacks. First, Israel has been carrying them out with relative impunity. Tehran's technical ability to hit back is limited [...] Israel's air-force chief, Major General Amikam Norkin, announced that his country had launched the world's first air strike using the new fifth-generation fighter jet, the F-35, known in Israel by its Hebrew name, "Adir" (Mighty). Manufactured by Lockheed Martin Corporation, it is the most advanced weapon system in the world; Israel has praised it as a "game-changer." Second, several senior Israeli officials have acknowledged that the air force has launched more than 100 strikes on Iranian and Hezbollah targets in Syria in recent years.⁹ The frequency and intensity of these skirmishes have brought Tehran and Jerusalem closer to the brink of direct military confrontation. The standoff between them has entered a new and dangerous phase.



"Provocation, war and restraint under the nuclear shadow: The Kargil conflict 1999"

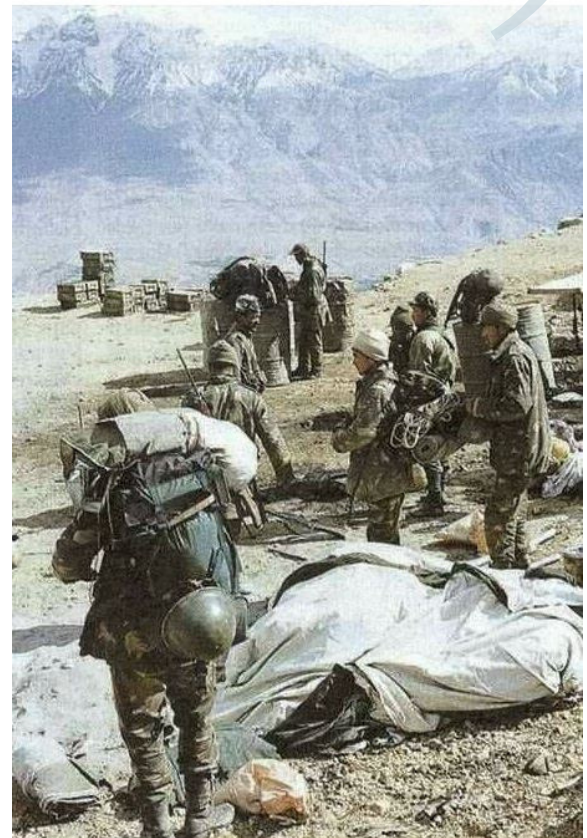
Professor John Gill

Taking its name from the principal town in the combat zone on the Indian side of the Line of Control (LOC), the Kargil conflict [...] was an intense, high-altitude encounter lasting longer than either the 1965 or 1971 wars and featured the first combat employment of the Indian Air Force since 1971. It represented the first open warfare between India and Pakistan as declared nuclear weapons states and was thus one of the few direct engagements between nuclear nations in world history [...] The potential for conventional escalation was inherent in the Kargil confrontation as either side could have escalated horizontally or vertically to push the envelope of conflict towards the nuclear threshold. This article will review the background to the war, the political and military dimensions of its conduct, and the significant long-term ramifications it has had for both countries.

Kargil in 1999 was a town of some 40,000 in Indian Kashmir approximately 8 km from the LOC's northern stretch. The town sits in a narrow valley at an elevation of 8,700 ft above sea level and is surrounded by barren, knife-edged peaks jutting to nearly 17,000 ft. Infrastructure is minimal on both sides of the LOC in this area and Kargil derives its importance from its placement astride India's National Highway 1 (NH1), a partially paved road that winds treacherously through a chain of valleys to connect Jammu and Kashmir State's summer capital, Srinagar.

In addition to being the lifeline for the civilian population of the Ladakh and Kargil Districts, the highway was the main supply route for the Indian Army forces that occupy the Siachen Glacier at the northern end of the LOC and guard the border with Tibet in the east. [...] This arid, high desert region includes some of the coldest inhabited places on earth (temperatures to minus 50°C) and the critical Zoji La at 11,500 ft is normally closed by snow from October or November to June each year. Given its proximity to the LOC and its limited season of utility, the highway thus represented a serious vulnerability for India. If it could reliably and regularly interdict traffic on NH1, Pakistan could at least temporarily choke access to Ladakh and endanger the Indian troops on the sensitive Siachen Glacier.

This section of the LOC was the responsibility of the Indian 3rd Infantry Division under 15th Corps and the harsh weather meant that the division routinely withdrew its outposts along the line during the winter months. Both armies were aware of this procedure, but Pakistan had not taken advantage of it previously. Indeed, for the Indians, the remoteness of the region combined with the extreme terrain and climatic conditions suggested that the risk of any substantial Pakistan Army action or militant infiltration was very low. The Indian Army thus deemed occasional foot patrols and rare helicopter observation flights sufficient to monitor this portion of the LOC. Beginning in the autumn of 1998, however, a small group of key Pakistani generals decided to exploit India's weaknesses in the Kargil sector.



"Civil Nuclear Energy in the Middle East: Demand, Parity, and Risk"

*Dr. Gawdat Bahgat and Robert Mason
(American University in Cairo)*

In the last few years, Syria has emerged as the main battleground of the Iranian-Israeli confrontation. For example, in late January 2015, an Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) general, Mohammad Ali Allah-Dadi, was killed in a suspected Israeli air strike in the Syrian Golan Heights. Since early 2018, the confrontation between Tehran and Jerusalem has significantly intensified. In February, an alleged Iranian drone was launched from T-4 air base east of Homs in central Syria. An Israeli Apache helicopter shot it down after it penetrated the country's air space. This limited operation quickly escalated when Israeli jets bombed several Iranian military positions, and an Israeli F-16 crashed after being hit by heavy anti-aircraft fire (the first downing of an Israeli plane in decades). Reacting to this development, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif stated that "Israel's so-called invincibility has been shattered." In turn, Prime Minister Netanyahu threatened, "We will act, if necessary, not only against Iranian proxies that are attacking us but against Iran itself."

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"Returning Foreign Terrorists: What Type of Security Challenges Are They Posing?"

Dr. Eman Ragab, NESAs alumna

The recent reverse flow of foreign terrorist fighters out of Syria and Iraq following the declared defeat of ISIS is dominating academic and policy circles not only in Europe but in the Middle East as well. According to the 2017 Euromed Survey of Experts and Actors, an average of 61% of respondents from both regions agree that foreign terrorists are representing the biggest threat posed by violent extremism. The number of respondents from Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and France [in agreement] are more than other countries.

These perceptions can be justified in light of the number of foreign terrorist fighters who joined ISIS and other terrorist organizations in Syria and Iraq. Until January 2015, the International Institute for the Study of Radicalization and Political Violence count of foreign terrorists from the Middle East was 11,000 fighters out of a total of 20,730 fighters; the rest originated from European and Western countries. Until the end of 2017, Radicalization Awareness Network counted more than 42,000 foreign terrorists from 120 countries.

It is estimated that the cohort of foreign terrorists who joined ISIS since 2014 represents around 50% of the organization, with varying fighting experience, as some of them acted as foot soldiers or middle- or very high-ranking officers.

It is noticeable that most of the efforts being done to counter the recent flow of foreign terrorists following the Battle of Raqqa is focusing on one aspect of that flow, which is the reverse flow to home countries, known as the 'returnees.' This aspect is inspired by ISIS' strategy of "remaining and ex-panding," which is based on the creation of new theatres of action guided by ISIS spokesman Abu Muhammad al-Adnani's call in September 2014 for "all supporters who could not join the caliphate to attack the enemy wherever they could, and with whatever means, without waiting for instructions."

This article argues that there are other aspects of that flow that raise other challenges to national and regional security which include leaving or being sent by ISIS to another conflict zone, or leaving to a third country to start a new life.

DR. EMAN RAGAB

NESA alumna Dr. Eman Ragab is an expert on Middle East security issues with a focus on violent non-state actors. She presently serves as Acting Head of the Military and Security Studies Unit at the Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies and her teaching posts include a Visiting Professorship at the American University in Cairo. Among her many accomplishments, Dr. Ragab was the first-place winner of the Arab League's 2018 Alecso Arab Young Researchers Award (pictured). Dr. Ragab has a longstanding involvement with the NESAs Center's Strategic Studies Network and more recently has become involved with NESAs joint-U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) programs.



"Morocco's Experience with Gender Gap Reduction in Education"

11

Professor Moha Ennaji, NESAs alumnus

MOHA ENNAJI

Moha Ennaji, an alumni of NESAs-
AFRICOM programs, is regarded
as among Morocco's preeminent
experts in gender issues,
migration, and culture, religion,
and politics in North Africa. Mr.
Ennaji is the founding president
of the International Institute for
Languages and Cultures at Fez
and a professor at the University
of Fez, Morocco. He has
additionally held numerous
visiting professorships at U.S.
universities including at Rutgers
University and the University of
Arizona. He is a contributor at
Middle East Institute and his
views have been featured in
global publications including Al
Jazeera, Al Ahram, The Huffington
Post, The Boston Globe, Japan
Times, and The Boston Globe.



This article presents a synthesis of the policies and measures for girls' education in Morocco and attempts to evaluate their results. It analyzes a wide range of initiatives and provides an overview of their relevance and impact in the Moroccan context. In Morocco, the lack of educational opportunity for girls is still evident, despite significant actions taken by the government. The article identifies the most promising approaches and priority areas for the development of girls' education. [...] The article also identifies and discusses the root causes of school attrition and illiteracy among women and the most important hurdles that require urgent attention, further proposing a meaningful integration of the gender perspective in schools and in the overall education system.

[...] Gender issues in education have started to gain importance and manifest themselves in many parts of Morocco, albeit in varying degrees. Despite the obvious importance of gender as a social identity that influences an individual's learning experiences and perceptions, and despite the fact that all students are "gendered" and thus potentially impacted, attention to gender issues in education appears to have been overlooked in favor of other educational variables until recently. Teacher training, which is a vital process for examining key teaching and learning issues, pays little attention to gender. As shown in Ennaji (2013a), teacher education textbooks, for example, allocate minimal space to gender issues and at times give the topic stereotypical and imprecise treatment (see also Zittleman & Sadker, 2002). Sanders (2002) notes that in many countries "gender equity [...] is in the earliest stages of consideration" (p. 242). Morocco is no exception.

In an ideal world, this gender-centric approach should be introduced in all domains, including in all disciplines of the teaching profession. However, this often does not occur for four principal reasons: i) lack of instructor background knowledge, ii) lack of interest in gender issues, iii) time constraints, and iv) erroneous and spurious beliefs that gender problems no longer exist.

An Afghan Major General's Strategy for Securing Afghanistan

Masood Ahmad Azizi, NESAs alumna

America has been at war in Afghanistan for seventeen years, but Afghanistan has been at war since the Soviet invasion in 1979. [Post-invasion] the international community disengaged from an increasingly violent and chaotic Afghanistan [...]. Only Pakistan paid attention, grooming a generation of young men—children who had arrived in Pakistan as refugees—into dedicated jihadis, creating the Taliban, which overran the warlords to create a self-styled Islamic Emirate that would become a safe haven for terrorists, where Al Qaeda and its leader, Osama bin Laden, would plot the 9/11 attacks.

Those attacks were what it took for the United States to rediscover Afghanistan, with the Taliban regime becoming the first target of President George W. Bush's War on Terror. With the wound of 9/11 still raw, American policy prioritized righteous vengeance over far-sighted security strategy [and] placed its trust in a poorly supervised Afghan government composed of exiles and former warlords. This

set the stage for corruption and tribalism, creating the conditions for a Taliban resurgence out of safe havens in Pakistan and preventing the creation of an effective government that could represent all Afghans.

President Barack Obama shifted resources and attention from Iraq to Afghanistan, but his efforts were constrained by the course that Bush had set. The Taliban were by then entrenched in much of the country and unwilling to negotiate when they thought they could win. [...] President Obama's insistence on public timelines for American withdrawal also undermined efforts—they provided the Taliban with a path to victory and demoralized pro-American Afghans who understood that success would take a long-term commitment.

President Donald Trump has the opportunity to break from the mistakes of the past and accomplish what President Bush and President Obama could not—withdraw in success from a stable, friendly Afghanistan and secure American influence in Central and South Asia. Part of the solution requires a coordinated, global approach to cut resources from terrorists and criminal networks; incentivize Taliban commitment; and secure the resources Afghanistan needs for reconstruction and development.

MASOOD AHMAD AZIZI

Major General Masood Ahmad Azizi is Afghanistan's current Deputy Minister for Policy and Strategy. He previously served as the youngest and longest-serving deputy minister in the Interior Ministry. He is an alumna of a NESAs co-sponsored Track II diplomacy program, and has spoken at NESAs seminars to share his insights as an experienced security leader committed to policies transcending tribal and ethnic borders to unlock the full potential of Afghanistan and the Afghan people.



Also published in The National Interest. Full text.

The Limits of India's Soft Power in Afghanistan

Shanthie Mariet D'Souza, NESAs alumna

The latest round of US negotiations with the Taliban in Doha has garnered considerable international attention, with the group's co-founder, Mullah Baradar, leading the insurgent team. As the search for an end to the long war in Afghanistan has intensified, prospects of a quick-fix solution through peace negotiations by major powers like the US and Russia has left India in a quandary. New Delhi's policy of unconditional support provided to the Afghan government is hitting a roadblock as Kabul is being increasingly sidelined not only in these externally mediated peace negotiations, but also in the internal reconfiguration that is taking place in the light of the ongoing negotiations and the upcoming presidential election.

However, with a possible delay of the elections and talk of establishing an interim government to achieve progress in the negotiating efforts, what are India's policy options? Will New Delhi reach out to the Taliban and other stakeholders? Or will it continue with its present policy of support to the Afghan government? More importantly, will the benefits of the last decade of

soft power translate into tangible gain? These are serious questions that New Delhi will be confronted with in the summer of 2019.

Amidst contested data on how much territory the Taliban actually controls, violence peaked in 2018 [and] is projected to escalate as the Taliban prepares for another bloody spring offensive.

Afghanistan's instability has direct security implications for India. Over time, not only have Indian projects in Afghanistan come under attacks by armed groups, but some of the India-delivered projects have come under the arc of insurgent influence. Reports indicate that the Zaranj Delaram road built by India is now controlled by the Taliban. There are concerns that in case of the return of the Taliban to Kabul in some form, which is one of the two scenarios of the ongoing peace talks — the other being a breakdown of the process — the attention of extremist forces and their sponsors would invariably shift to India, especially to Kashmir. The recent attacks in Pulwama are indicative of how the situation might develop.

SHANTHIE MARIET D'SOUZA



Dr. Shanthie Mariet D'Souza is Founder and President of Mantraya, a research forum making constructive contributions in the realm of strategy and innovation, with a focus on non-traditional security challenges in South Asia. Dr. D'Souza is also a Research Fellow at the Institute of South Asian Studies (National University of Singapore). Her research focuses on Afghanistan and the politics of aid, development, gender, and security. Among her most recent published work is the edited volume *Countering Insurgencies and Violent Extremism in South and South East Asia* (Routledge, 2019).

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Additional information and images at:
<http://www.nesa-center.org/>



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