



September 2018 Monthly Report

NESA Region Trends

- Throughout NESA's September programs, participants expressed a strong support for robust and continued security cooperation with the United States. The coursework and discussion topics of most of NESA's September programs also amplified this theme of U.S. cooperation with the region: the Washington Seminar highlighted progress made by the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS; the Iraq National Defense University (NDU) Seminar focused on U.S. support towards Iraqi state-building; the Executive Seminar examined the benefits of U.S. political-military relations with the region; the Saudi Ministry of the Interior training course also demonstrated the benefits of enduring military-to-military and diplomatic ties between the U.S. and NESA region.
- Counterterror, with a focus on D-ISIS and stymying radicalization of vulnerable populations like refugees, was heavily discussed in at least half of NESA's September programs and events (including the Washington Seminar, Iraq NDU, Seminar, and Executive Seminar).
- Nontraditional or new threats to the NESA geopolitical landscape, including a resurgent Iran and the emergence of cyber as a warfighting domain, were an anxiety for participants.
- In addressing the above issues (counterterror, including D-ISIS, and non-traditional threats), participants stressed the critical role played by continued U.S. support. Participants, especially those of the Iraq NDU and Executive Seminars, expressed a desire to learn from and mirror U.S. government entities and processes in their home countries (including at the state and local level, and including U.S. institutions like the National Defense University).



Prof. Des Roches, center, & participants

Saudi Ministry of the Interior Training Course

26—29 August

The NESACenter facilitated an intensive training course involving U.S. military personnel training internal security forces associated with the Ministry of the Interior (MOI) of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from 26 – 29 August 2018 in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The MOI program was initially originated by Mohammed bin Nayef Al Saud and was the culmination of over one decade of planning. NESACenter's presence at the MOI training course was represented by Professor David Des Roches, who delivered approximately six hours of rigorous classroom instruction per day, in addition to directing required readings. Lectures showcased the NESACenter's resources and expertise, and representative topics of classroom discussion included U.S.-Saudi relations, the ongoing war in Yemen, the GCC crisis, and the relationship between Saudi Arabia's economy and its oil and gas movements.

Professor Des Roches's lectures were attended by U.S. military and diplomatic personnel in addition to the Saudi MOI security forces. In fact, for the past three years, the NESACenter has provided popular orientation courses to U.S. Army trainers deployed to Saudi Arabia, and the MOI training course offered welcome help to deployed U.S. forces, which maintain a robust relationship with the Saudi MOI.



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LTG Terry Wolff & Prof. Brianne Todd

Washington Seminar, Sept. 2018

13 September

NESA held its fourth Washington Seminar luncheon discussion of 2018 at the Army Navy Club on 13 September 2018. The discussion, “Post-ISIS: A Conversation on the Counter-ISIS Campaign in Iraq & Syria”, focused on critical topics like counterterrorism, reconstruction in territory formerly held by the ISIS caliphate, degrading and destroying remaining ISIS networks, and best practices and lessons learned for the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL.



The Seminar luncheon’s featured speaker was NESACenter Director LTG (Ret.) Terry Wolff, himself a leading figure in the fight against ISIS and the Global Coalition Deputy Special Presidential Envoy. NESACenter Professor Brianne Todd moderated discussions and question-and-answer sessions. The Washington Seminar luncheon was attended by over 60 diplomatic officials from the NESACenter region and regionally

adjacent countries, as well as some representatives from the NESACenter faculty.



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Iraq National Defense University Seminar

4 September—14 September

From 4-14 September 2018, NESAC hosted the Iraq National Defense University Faculty and Student Seminar for faculty, students, and senior-ranking military personnel associated with the Iraq National Defense University (NDU). Over the course of almost two weeks, Iraq NDU faculty and students engaged on both practitioner-oriented and academic topics like U.S. socio-political processes and institutions, U.S. military tradecraft, the practical and pedagogical underpinnings of the American National Defense University, and best practices for interfacing with American academic and governmental institutions.

NESAC Professor Daniel Curfiss acted as course director, and brought in notable guest speakers including Dr. Michael Bell, chief Middle East Adviser on the National Security Council and Ambassador Marc Grossman, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs. Some of the more notable discussions of the two-week seminar included open and honest conversations analyzing lessons learned from U.S. military presence in Iraq, and the U.S. role in rebuilding Iraqi state institutions.

The seminar featured off-sites at places of interest including the Capitol (where former Congressman Martin Frost engaged participants), and the Middle East Institute, where the Iraqi delegation saw firsthand the role played by think tanks in Washington's political ecosystem. Iraqi Ambassador to the United States Fared Yasseen also hosted participants and NESAC faculty at an evening reception.

Throughout the seminar, the Iraqi delegation expressed their serious desire for continued cooperation with the United States, especially joint professional military education. This seminar was the first of its kind, and the NESAC Center is privileged to serve as an institutional link between the U.S. and Iraqi militaries, and support their shared objective of securing a prosperous, democratic Iraq.



Iraq NDU Seminar participants



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Executive Seminar: Non-Traditional Security Challenges

10—21 September

 Near East South Asia Center
for Strategic Studies

 Near East South Asia Center
for Strategic Studies



Gen. Michael Hayden

Addressing the NESA region’s rapidly-evolving geopolitical landscape requires multifaceted, multilateral approaches. To this end, NESAC hosted the Executive Seminar “Non-Traditional Security Challenges” from 10-21 September 2018. NESAC Professor Dr. Gawdat Bahgat acted as course director, and was supported by facilitators NESAC Professors John Wood and NESAC Professor and former Interior Minister of Afghanistan Ali Jalali. The 37 participants of the Executive Seminar were high-level military, civilian government, and civil society figures from 23 countries including Egypt, India, Iraq,

Israel, Sri Lanka, Tunisia, Turkey, and the United States.

“ We would like to thank to the team at NESAC [and] express our gratitude to the United States Government for providing this opportunity [...] NESAC has made the seminar results-oriented, effective, and well managed.

A seminar participant delivers remarks on behalf of his cohorts, 21 September

The seminar rigorously examined “non-traditional” security challenges facing the NESAC region, with a focus on counterterrorism, transnational crime, and capacity building. Discussion topics included counterterrorism, cyber, D- ISIS, Iran, religion and society, intelligence gathering, artificial intelligence, and proliferation of WMDs. Special speakers included General (ret.) Michael Hayden, the former Director of the NSA and CIA; LTG Michael X. Garrett, Commanding General of U.S. Army Central; and Mr. Dan Brouillette, Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Energy. Attendees participated on site visits including to the International Monetary Fund and Capitol Hill. Participants also met Ms. Allison Silberberg, Mayor of Alexandria, Virginia, who spoke on the effectiveness of municipal level governments providing services leading to safer, more secure communities, while former Congressman Dennis Hertel explained American legislative processes during the U.S. Capitol visit.

Commanding General of U.S. Army Central; and Mr. Dan Brouillette, Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Energy. Attendees participated on site visits including to the International Monetary Fund and Capitol Hill. Participants also met Ms. Allison Silberberg, Mayor of Alexandria, Virginia, who spoke on the effectiveness of municipal level governments providing services leading to safer, more secure communities, while former Congressman Dennis Hertel explained American legislative processes during the U.S. Capitol visit.



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Qatar Diplomatic Institute Seminar

22-28 September



NESA Professors Richard Russell, John Wood and Gawdat Bahgat facilitated and taught a weeklong seminar at the Qatari Diplomatic Institute in Doha, Qatar, from 22-28 September. About thirty participants from the Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defense, and Ministry of the Interior attended. Professors Russell, Wood, and Bahgat lectured on and led discussions on crucial NESA-relevant touchpoints including U.S. foreign policy and defense priorities under the Trump Administration, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, energy security, and regional maritime security issues.

faculty & alumni publications

Select publications:

Dr. Gawdat Baghat: The Brewing War in the Middle East: Iran & Israel, Middle East Policy , XXV (3) (Fall 2018), 67-78. <<http://www.mepc.org/journal/brewing-war-between-iran-and-israel-strategic-implications>>.

Pradhuma B. Shah, NESA alumnus,. “High Hopes For BIMSTEC Summit.” The Kathmandu Post, 31 August 2018, <<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2018-08-31/high-hopes-for-bimstec-summit.html>>.



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nesa in the news

Select media:

Dr. Gawdat Bahgat, Voice of America, *Africa News Tonight*, 21 September 2018. <<https://www.voanews.com/a/4561216.html>>

Professor David Des Roches, Voice of America, *Africa News Tonight*, 21 September 2018. <<https://www.voanews.com/a/4561216.html>>

Professor David Des Roches, France 24, *France 24 Debate*, “Which World Order?” 25 September 2018. <<https://www.france24.com/en/20180925-debate-which-world-order-trump-macron-spell-out-rival-visions-un>>

Professor David Des Roches, Al Hurra, 25 September 2018. <<https://www.alhurra.com/t/4.html>>

U.S. Department of Defense. 26 September, 2018. *Seminar Looks at Near East, South Asia Threats*. News release. <<https://dod.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/1645591/seminar-looks-at-near-east-south-asia-nontraditional-threats/>>



Building Relationships Enhancing Security



Above: Prof. Anne Moisan greets Washington Seminar guests. Top right: ES-03 participants and Gen. Hayden.



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