

# NEAR EAST SOUTH ASIA CENTER FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES

Monthly Report–November/December 2020

## NESA Region Trends – FOCUS ON SOUTH ASIA

- **Bangladeshi politics and Bangladesh foreign policy is increasingly being forced to navigate tensions between India and China.** Official government statements and media interviews routinely make mention of the tensions. This, of course, complicates Bangladesh’s decision making as it has long-standing ties with India and has increasingly economic and political relations with Beijing.
- **Resurgence of Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) in the Pakistan-Afghanistan border areas.** This terrorist group was severely weakened (and splintered) by (belated) Pakistan security operations (2014–17) and facilitated by US drone strikes targeting TTP leadership. In the last six to nine months they are showing strong signs of regrouping and many splinter groups have announced their merger into central TTP. Militant activity concentrated in former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA).
- **India-China tensions are moving beyond the contested border areas and into the Eastern Indian Ocean/ Bay of Bengal.** India is seeking to project power further east by increasingly employing the Adaman and Nicobar Island zone, and regional foreign policy among Bay of Bengal littoral states increasingly discusses China’s diplomatic, economic, and potential security presence in the region.

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Engagement • Education • Outreach

# NESA Seminars

## Senior Executive Seminar

The NESA Center held a **Senior Executive Seminar (SES)** themed “**Gray Zone Warfare and Great Power Competition.**” The week-long seminar is designed to deepen participants’ understanding of the evolving nature of modern warfare as waged by a Whole-of-Government and using elements beyond a conventional military. Gray zone warfare is waged not just in times of open conflict but also during heightened tension. It was attended by 83 participants from 24 countries. Led by **Professor Des Roches** with remarks/facilitation provided by **Professor Jalali** and **Academic Dean Kangas**. <https://nesa-center.org/senior-executive-seminar-gray-zone-warfare-and-great-power-competition/>



Visit [www.NESA-Center.org](http://www.NESA-Center.org) for additional information.

# NESA Seminars

## International Military Officers' Forum (IMOF)

The NESA Center held an **International Military Officers' Forum (IMOF)** seminar themed “**Great Power Competition and Implications for Central Command's Region.**” The three-day seminar featured internationally-recognized scholar-practitioners on the NESA Center faculty and elsewhere. The program was designed to educate over 150 foreign military officers stationed at U.S. Central Command as well as those assigned to the Joint Chiefs of Staff and U.S. Special Operations Command. The seminar dove into the contours of the emerging great power competition between the United States, Russia, and China and explored the implications for the U.S. Central Command in it's area of responsibility. Featured remarks from **Academic Dean Kangas, Professor Bahgat, Professor Abbas, Professor Todd, and Mr. Payne.** <https://nesa-center.org/imof-great-power-competition-implications-for-centcom-aor/>

## International Military Officers' Forum Great Power Competition and Implications for Central Command's Region November 17–19, 2020



# NESA Seminars

## Executive Seminar

Dr. Michael Sharnoff, supported by Dr. Hassan Abbas and Col. Daniel Curfiss, coordinated the NESA Center Executive Seminar attended by 93 foreign policy and security professionals from 23 countries. The theme of the seminar was “Unseen Opponents: The Security Challenges of Pandemics.” Participants were to achieve a set of objectives at the conclusion of the seminar, including discussing the scope/depth of the pandemic; the economic, political, social, and security impacts of the pandemic; the relationship between health challenges and national/international security; and strategies or lessons to better prepare for future pandemics. <https://nesa-center.org/executive-seminar-unseen-opponents-the-security-challenges-of-pandemics/>





# NESA Faculty & Staff Engagement

## Dr. Hassan Abbas



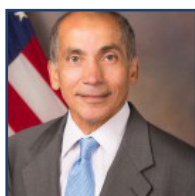
**November 9, 2020**  
– Published a report titled, “US Policy Toward South Asia: Ideas and Choices for the Next Administration”, Center for Global Policy, Washington DC.

<https://cgpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/20201109-PB-US-South-Asia.pdf>



**December 8, 2020** – Served as panelist for “The Future of Afghanistan and Challenges for the New Administration,” in Jamestown Foundation’s 14th Annual Terrorism Conference. <https://youtu.be/eMFvtyKI88I>

## Dr. Gawdat Bahgat



**November 18, 2020** – Released “Biden Administration and Iran: The Way Forward” within the Gulf International Forum. He highlighted how Washington’s leadership change should be viewed by all Gulf countries as a strategic opportunity to engage in a dialogue to address their underlying common threats and emerging opportunities. <https://gulffif.org/biden-administration-and-iran-the-way-forward/>

**December 23, 2020** – Published an article titled, “Iranian-Israeli Confrontation – the Cyber Domain”, Middle East Policy. <https://doi.org/10.1111/mepo.12516>



**November 13, 2020** – In a video posted by the Gulf International Forum (GIF) and as a senior fellow at GIF, Des Roches



## David Des Roches

**November 13, 2020** – In a video posted by the Gulf International Forum (GIF) and as a senior fellow at GIF, Des Roches

talked about the priority for the Joe Biden administration in the Gulf region to come to an arrangement with Iran to rejoin The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z2glGtxbgTI>

**November 16–20, 2020** – Led the NESA Center Senior Executive Seminar. <https://nesa-center.org/senior-executive-seminar-gray-zone-warfare-and-great-power-competition/>

**December 9, 2020** – On the subject of modern Turkey, participated in the Columbia University Middle East Forum (an ongoing series of off-the-record lectures hosted by the Columbia Middle East Studies department).

## Ali Ahmad Jalali



**November 13, 2020** – Served as the guest of a TV show of Deutsche Welle (Germany) debating with Taliban representative Mawlawi Wasiq on the peace process in Afghanistan.

## Dr. Roger Kangas



**December 15, 2020** – Served as a discussant for a book release panel on “Countering Insurgencies and Violent Extremism in South and South East Asia”, edited by Shanthie D’Souza, Routledge: UK, © 2019.

## Dr. Richard L. Russell



**November 17–19, 2020** – Moderated the NESA International Military Officers’ Forum (IMOF) seminar themed “Great Power Competition and Implications for Central Command’s Region.” <https://nesa-center.org/imof-great-power-competition-implications-for-centcom-aor/>

# NESA Faculty & Staff Engagement

## Michael Sharnoff



**November 9, 2020** – Gave a lecture titled “**Shifting Dynamics of the Middle East, Israel, and It’s Neighbors**” to the Council of Former Federal Executives & Associates.

**December 7–17, 2020** – Coordinated the NESA Center **Executive Seminar** with support from Dr. Hassan Abbas and Col. Daniel Curfiss. <https://nesa-center.org/executive-seminar-unseen-opponents-the-security-challenges-of-pandemics/>

## Richard Wiersema



**December 1, 2020** – Delivered a lecture, titled **Perspectives on Strategic Leadership**, to faculty and students at the Royal Jordanian National Defense College.

This lecture is the first in a series of four that NESA will deliver to the college on topics their leadership requested as part of continuing our relationship and support during the current travel restrictions.

# NESA Digital Series

## Dr. Hassan Abbas



**November 2, 2020** – In the eighth segment of the **NESA Interview Series**, Professor Hassan Abbas interviewed **Mr. Shuja Nawaz**, a political and strategic analyst who is

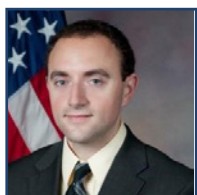


currently a Distinguished Fellow at the Atlantic Council. <https://nesa-center.org/us-pakistan-relations-at-another-fork-in-the-road-a-conversation-with-south-asia-scholar-shuja-nawaz/>

focused on outside players and partners in Algeria within the context of the so-called “great power competition”.

<https://nesa-center.org/outside-players-and-partners-in-algeria-dr-arслан-chikhaoui/>

## Fahad Malaikah



**November 10, 2020** – Interviewed **Dr. Arslan Chikhaoui** for the sixth edition of the **NESA Alumni Virtual Interview Series**. The conversation



**November 20, 2020** – Interviewed **Dr. Uttam Kumar Sinha** for the seventh edition of the **NESA Alumni Virtual Interview Series**. The interview focused on balancing foreign policy and state security with non-traditional security, particularly climate change and water security, within a South Asia regional context. <https://nesa-center.org/balancing-state-security-and-foreign-policy-with-non-traditional-security/>



# NESA Digital Series

**November 23, 2020** – Fahad Malaikah interviewed **Mr. Zine Labidine Ghebouli** for the eighth edition of the **NESA Alumni Virtual Interview Series**. The interview featured a very open and candid discussion with Mr. Ghebouli on the state of the Hirak (protest movement) in Algeria in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and the recent November 2020 constitutional referendum. <https://nesa-center.org/algeria-in-transition/>



**December 3, 2020** – Interviewed **Mr. Roger Albinyana** on the current state of the Barcelona Process in the ninth edition of the **NESA Alumni Virtual Interview Series**. Mr. Albinyana also discussed the prospects for US-EU relations under a new Biden administration. Mr. Roger Albinyana is the Director of Mediterranean Regional Policies and Human Development at the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed). <https://nesa-center.org/euro-med-integration-in-2020-and-beyond/>

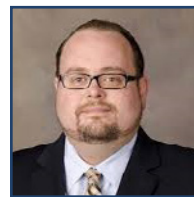


**December 14, 2020** – In the tenth edition of the **NESA Alumni Virtual Interview Series**, Mr. Malaikah interviewed **Professor Steven Blockmans** on the challenges and prospects for U.S. – EU relations under a Biden presidency, as well as how the trans-Atlantic relationship

going forward may impact relevant parts of the NESA region. Professor Blockmans is the Director of Research, Head of EU Foreign Policy, and Head of Institutional Affairs at the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS), based in Brussels. <https://nesa-center.org/the-biden-presidency-and-u-s-e-u-relations-challenges-and-prospects/>



## Jeffrey S. Payne



**November 3, 2020** – Interviewed **RDML Curt Renshaw** for NESA's **IOR Digital Series**. RDML Renshaw discussed not only the complex set of challenges in the waters of the larger MENA region, but he also highlighted how the pandemic of 2020 created new hurdles for maritime forces in the region to overcome. <https://nesa-center.org/marsec-perspectives-with-rdml-curt-renshaw/>



**December 1, 2020** – NESA's Jeff Payne talked with Dr. Geoffrey Gresh, Dr. Joel Wuthnow, and Dr. Thomas Lynch for **NESA's IOR Digital Series** on how the U.S. sees



## NESA Digital Series

priorities in the Indian Ocean Region and what challenges need to be addressed on the horizon. <https://nesa-center.org/u-s-concepts-for-the-indian-ocean-region/>



**December 8, 2020** – Jeffrey Payne moderated the final installment of the NESA IOR Digital Series for calendar-year 2020. NESA Professors Richard Russell, Brianne Todd,

and Academic Dean Roger Kangas took a deep dive into how the concepts surrounding Great Power Competition applied to NESA's Area of Responsibility (AOR). <https://nesa-center.org/great-power-competition-within-the-nesa-aor/>



## NESA Alumni Contributions

Chikhaoui, Arslan. 2020. "Libya: Theoretical Political Moves"; for NESA Center. <https://nesa-center.org/libya-theoretical-political-moves/>

Chikhaoui, Arslan. 2020. "The Challenges of the Mediterranean"; for NESA Center. <https://nesa-center.org/the-challenges-of-the-mediterranean/>

Khatib, Dania Koleilat. 2020. "A Turkish-Saudi Rapprochement could Promote Stability in the Region"; for NESA Center. <https://nesa-center.org/a-turkish-saudi-rapprochement-can-promote-stability-in-the-region/>

Chikhaoui, Arslan. 2020. "Algeria, CBRN Terrorism and WMD Non-Proliferation"; for NESA Center. <https://nesa-center.org/algeria-cbrn-terrorism-and-wmd-non-proliferation/>

Khatib, Dania Koleilat. 2020. "A Turkish-Saudi Rapprochement Could Promote Stability in the Region"; for NESA Center. <https://nesa-center.org/a-turkish-saudi-rapprochement-can-promote-stability-in-the-region/>



# NESA Alumni Engagement

Total NESA Alumni: 10,636

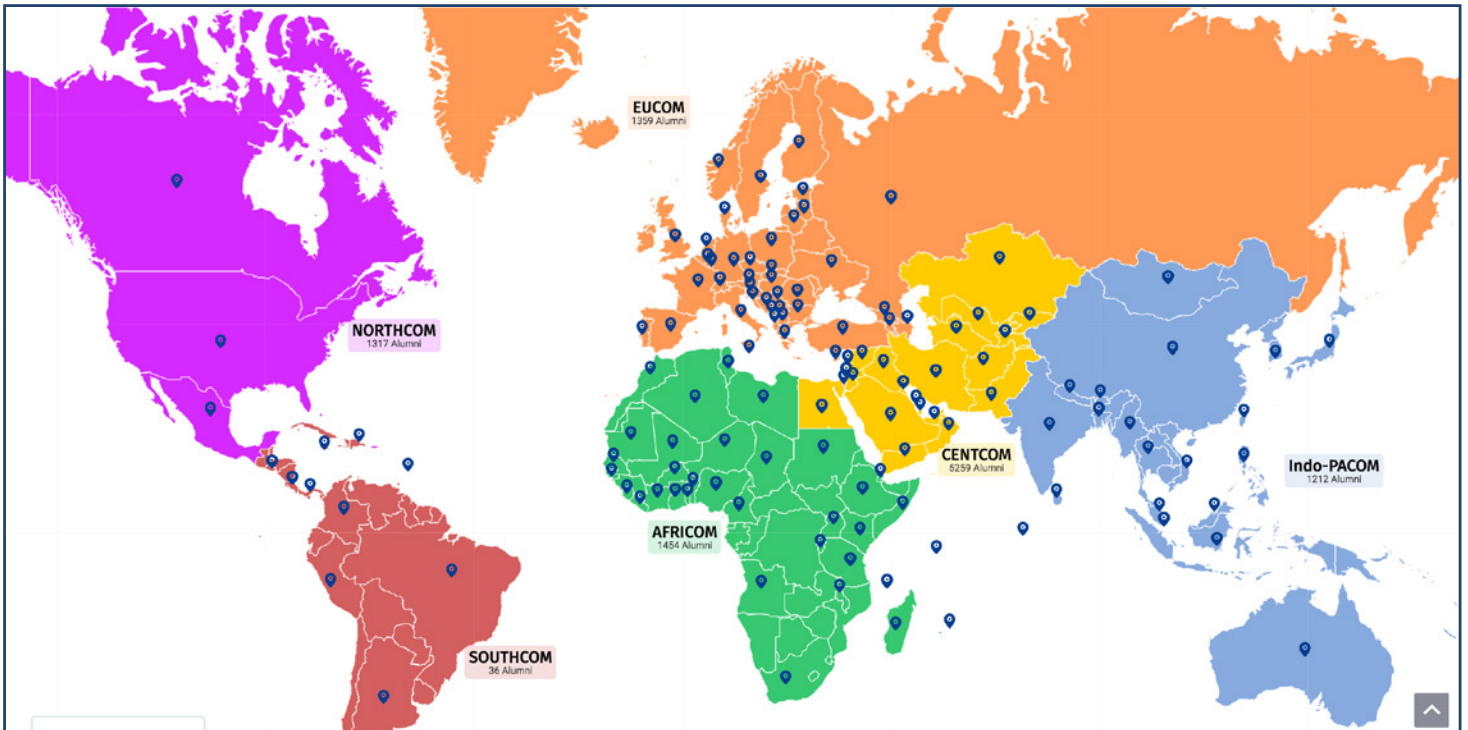
Total Countries: 134

Total Alumni Engaged in FY20: 635

Total Alumni Engaged thus far in FY21: 120

Visit the new NESA Alumni Interactive Map:

<https://nesa-center.org/alumni-map/>



## NESA Upcoming Events

### NESA Executive Seminar

February 1–11, 2021

Washington, DC

### NESA Executive Seminar

February 11, 2021

Washington, DC

### NESA Washington Embassy Orientation

March 22–26, 2021

Washington, DC

### NESA Senior Executive Seminar

March 29, 2021–April 2, 2021

Washington, DC

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