



NEAR EAST SOUTH ASIA CENTER FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES

NESA Update

July 2022 – August 2022

NESA Region Trends – GULF

- **There is great concern over a possible revival of an Iran Deal.** Gulf residents do not share the European view that a deal on Iran’s nuclear program will enhance the security of the region. Instead, they feel a possible deal lifting sanctions in exchange for freezing Iran’s nuclear program will grant license for enhanced Iranian proxy action as well as stepped-up missile development. An additional concern is the fear that allowing Iran to legally export oil will undermine the Saudi efforts to keep oil at about \$100 a barrel to fund transformation programs. One prominent academic stated he was amazed the U.S. would consider concessions to Iran while it launches attacks against Americans in the U.S. and overseas. The Israeli government has made it clear that it is not satisfied with and will not abide by the nuclear agreement the U.S., Europe, and Iran are negotiating.
- **Iran is not standing still, waiting for the U.S., Israel, and some GCC states to isolate it.** A NESA Faculty member attended a conference in Doha, sponsored by the Doha Institute, which according to the organizer, was meant to “bring Iran to the Arab world and bring the Arab world to Iran.” The UAE and Kuwait pulled their ambassadors from Tehran after the Saudi embassy was stormed in the wake of the execution of Nimr al-Nimr in 2016. Now six years later, both states have recently returned ambassadors to Iran. In short, Iran is trying to counter U.S. policy and find a way to work with its Arab neighbors, and some of them do not want to put all their eggs in the U.S.-Israeli basket.
- **There is enhanced demand for U.S. air and missile defense technology.** Gulf partners continue to search for a “field and forget” drone protection system. Once there is a credible drone-killer system, Gulf states will rush to purchase it. The Ukrainian war has done great damage to Russia’s reputation

IN THIS REPORT

1–2 NESA Region Trends

3–10 Programs & Events

11–12 Engagement

13 Alumni Contributions

13 Upcoming Events

Engagement • Education • Outreach

NESA Region Trends

as an exporter of reliable, high-tech military equipment. Gulf partners have come to the view that their only options for missile defenses are American and – to a lesser extent – Israeli. Demand will outstrip American domestic production at current levels. Read more: <https://www.mei.edu/publications/we-need-it-yesterday-air-defense-missile-sales-period-maximum-demand>

- **The widespread belief that the U.S. is leaving the region gains steam.** This has been an evergreen since the publication of the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review and the “Pivot to Asia.” It has picked up pace recently. The sub-optimal Afghanistan withdrawal has done great damage to America’s reputation in the region. America’s apparent inability to have any effect on the chaotic political situation in Baghdad is seen as proof of American disinterest and/or lack of capability to be a credible security guarantor in the region. It is remarkable how uniform this view has become among regionally based security analysts.
- **Surprising point of view from Oman.** In August 2022, a NESA Center faculty member gave a talk at the Omani MOD and was surprised when an Omani officer questioned U.S. credibility, saying, “How can we trust the U.S. if it changes its policy when a new administration takes office?”

Visit www.NESA-Center.org for additional information.

NESA Programs & Events

NESA Center and IISS Roundtable and Workshop

On 18–19 July 2022, the NESA Center and the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) held an event at IISS' Headquarters in Arundel House, London, UK, focused on the Security of the Western Indo-Pacific/Western Indian Ocean. Participants numbered approximately 32. The event was part of the NESA Center's ongoing collaborative effort with IISS. The NESA Center was represented by Dean Dr. Roger Kangas, Adjunct Professor Jack Gill, and Assistant Professor Jeffrey Payne. The NESA Center team also participated in a roundtable discussion with Dr. Sumit Sen, the Director of Policy Planning in the Indian Ministry of External Affairs, and his team.

NESA Center and IISS Roundtable & Workshop 18–19 July 2022



NESA Programs & Events

CENTCOM Strategic Survey Seminar

The Near East South Asia (NESA) Center for Strategic Studies hosted a CENTCOM Strategic Survey Seminar in Tampa, Florida, from 19–21 July 2022. The 3-day seminar was entitled “Evolving U.S. National Security in the Middle East and South Asia.” It was aimed at giving about 35 U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) and U.S. Special Operations Command (SOCOM) civilian and military personnel a policy and strategic overview of the key security challenges facing CENTCOM’s area of operations. The seminar provided CENTCOM and SOCOM personnel a deep regional and functional political and security analysis that is not readily accessible inside governmental security walls. Course Directors NESA Center Professor Dr. Richard Russell and NESA Liaison Officer to CENTCOM Cynthia Pritchett led the seminar. The NESA Center’s internationally respected leadership and faculty members, Deputy Director COL David Lamm (USA, Ret.), Professor Dr. Gawdat Bahgat, Associate Professor Dr. Michael Sharnoff, Distinguished Professor Dr. Hassan Abbas, and Distinguished Professor Ambassador Ali Jalali, gave presentations at the seminar. Guest speakers included subject matter experts from the Washington Institute of Near East Policy, The Atlantic Council, and the Center for Strategic and Diplomatic Studies at the University of South Florida. <https://nesa-center.org/centcom-strategic-survey-seminar>

CENTCOM Strategic Survey Seminar

19–21 July 2022



From the left: Professor Dr. Hassan Abbas, Professor Ambassador Ali Jalali, and Professor Dr. Richard Russell speaking on the last day of the seminar.

NESA Programs & Events

Perspectives on Strategic Leadership Seminar

From 25–27 July 2022, the NESA Center conducted a Perspectives on Strategic Leadership seminar with students and faculty of the Royal Jordanian National Defense College (RJNDC) in Amman, Jordan. The seminar marked the start of the academic year for the 120 students attending the year-long senior officer professional military education (PME) course in Jordan. The attendees included 38 international students from Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, the United Arab Emirates, Germany, the United States, Taiwan, and Sudan. There were 18 senior government officials from the Ministry of the Interior, the Religious Ministry, the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Finance. NESA Center’s long-term aim is to partner with RJNDC faculty to continue to provide instruction and resources to their professional military education programs. The seminar was led by Professor Richard Wiersema and Dean Charles Marks. GlobalNET training services were conducted by Outreach and Alumni Coordinator Christopher Muller. <https://nesa-center.org/royal-jordanian-national-defense-college-perspectives-on-strategic-leadership-seminar>

Royal Jordanian National Defense College “Perspectives on Strategic Leadership Seminar”

25–27 July 2022



Photo of Professor Richard Wiersema (left) and Dean Charles Marks (right) speaking to the Perspectives on Strategic Leadership seminar participants.

NESA Programs & Events

The NESA Center Hosts Yemeni Ambassador for a Roundtable

NESA Center Executive Officer Sam Marrero moderated a roundtable with His Excellency Yemeni Ambassador Mohammad Al-Hadhrami and NESA Center Faculty on Thursday, 28 July 2022, at 1330–1500 in Washington, DC. Ambassador Al-Hadhrami began his tenure as Ambassador in March 2022, having served prior to that as the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Yemen. A NESA alumnus, Ambassador Al-Hadhrami completed the NESA Executive Seminar in 2014 and a Washington Seminar in September 2014. He also participated in the Red Sea Arena Dialogue in April 2019. The NESA Center has an extensive history of hosting Yemeni participants, going back more than 20 years. With 437 total alumni, the NESA Yemeni participant alumni group is among the most engaged on NESA social media and alumni surveys. Ambassador Al-Hadhrami's Executive Advisor, Adonis Fakhri, who participated in the roundtable as well, is also a NESA alumnus, having attended the Washington Embassy Orientation in 2017, as well as Washington Seminar Luncheons in February 2019 and November 2018. Ambassador Al-Hadhrami gave remarks and took questions on the ongoing Yemeni Civil War, the state of Yemen's economy, as well as the implications for the Yemeni conflict of President Biden's recent trip to the Middle East. *A third renewal to the fragile ceasefire of the Yemen Civil War was announced five days after the roundtable.* <https://nesa-center.org/his-excellency-yemeni-ambassador-mohammad-al-hadhrami-visits-the-nesa-center>

The NESA Center Hosts Yemeni Ambassador for a Roundtable

28 July 2022



Left to right: NESA Center Professor Dr. Gawdat Bahgat, Sam Marrero, Ambassador Mohammad Al-Hadhrami, and Adonis Fakhri.

NESA Programs & Events

Executive Seminar: Managing New Technology & Security

From 25 July to 5 August 2022, the Near East South Asia (NESA) Center for Strategic Studies conducted an Executive Seminar that focused on how the security sector is informed by technological advances. The event's topics included Autonomous/Unmanned Systems, Space, Cybersecurity, Artificial Intelligence, Information, and Digital Infrastructure, among others. Special sessions on energy, the Indo Pacific, and Women, Peace, and Security were also included in the program. Participants hailed from 23 countries throughout Africa and Asia. The participants represented military institutions, diplomatic offices, law enforcement divisions, and other government elements from their respective countries. The event was led by NESA Center Assistant Professor Jeffrey Payne with facilitation/presentations provided by NESA Center Leadership and Faculty, which included: Deputy Director COL David Lamm, USA (Ret.), Academic Dean Dr. Roger Kangas, Professor Dr. Gawdat Bahgat, Associate Professor Dr. Michael Sharnoff, and Associate Professor David Des Roches. <https://nesa-center.org/nesa-center-conducts-an-executive-seminar-on-technology-security>

[Read the Executive Seminar on Technology & Security Final Report \[PDF\]](#)

Executive Seminar “Managing New Technology & Security” 25 July–5 August 2022



Professor Jeffrey Payne welcoming the Executive Seminar participants.

NESA Programs & Events

NESA-AFRICOM Countering Violent Extremism Workshop

The Near East South Asia (NESA) Center for Strategic Studies, in partnership with U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM), conducted the “NESA-AFRICOM Countering Violent Extremism: The Evolution of Radicalization and Responses Workshop” from 1–5 August 2022 in Casablanca, Morocco. In examining radicalization in the region, two issues came to the forefront: the continuing and evolving use of social media as a preferred tool used by extremist groups for propaganda and the recruiting and the increasing challenges dealing with the prevention, de-radicalization, and reintegration of returning foreign fighters/defectors.

There were 25 participants/speakers from seven North African-Sahel countries attending. NESA Center Associate Professor Anne Moisan directed the program, which began with a series of presentations followed by a tabletop exercise where participants were asked to address and develop strategic communications plans and strategies. Assistance with the tabletop exercise was provided by Dr. Daveed Gartenstein-Ross, Founder & CEO of Valens Global, and Varsha Koduvayur, an analyst at Valens Global. <https://nesa-center.org/nesa-africom-countering-violent-extremism-the-evolution-of-radicalization-and-responses-workshop>

NESA-AFRICOM Countering Violent Extremism Workshop “The Evolution of Radicalization and Responses”

1–5 August 2022



Professor Anne Moisan at the front table presenting during the NESA-AFRICOM Countering Violent Extremism workshop.

NESA Programs & Events

Silk Road Future Leader's Program: Emerging Regional Challenges

On 15–18 August 2022, the NESA Center hosted an informative Silk Road Future Leaders Seminar focused on the theme, “Emerging Regional Challenges.” The virtual seminar brought together the next generation of young military officers, diplomats, and academics from South and Central Asia. The seminar consisted of 8 sessions organized around themes relating to ongoing regional threats in South and Central Asia, which provided instruction and discussion regarding best practices for young leaders as they work to overcome regional security challenges. This year’s seminar focused on the complex nature of the emerging security challenges in the region – both in the traditional and nontraditional realms.

NESA Center Distinguished Professor of International Relations Dr. Hassan Abbas served as the course director and NESA Center leadership and faculty presenting in the seminar included Academic Dean Dr. Roger Kangas and Associate Professor Brianna Todd. Two other NESA faculty members, Professor Dr. Gawdat Bahgat and Assistant Professor Jeffrey Payne, served as moderators and facilitated conversations. <https://nesa-center.org/silk-road-future-leaders-program-emerging-regional-challenges>



Speakers from the top left: Dr. Hassan Abbas (Distinguished Professor of International Relations, NESA Center for Strategic Studies), Dr. Roger Kangas (Academic Dean, NESA Center for Strategic Studies), Elizabeth Threlkeld (Senior Fellow and Director South Asia, Stimson Center). [Click here to view the full list of speakers.](#)

NESA Programs & Events

Roundtable Discussion with Omani Ambassador to the United States Moosa Hamdan al Tai

On 18 August 2022, Professor Dr. Gawdat Bahgat coordinated a meeting with a NESA Center leadership and faculty team. Academic Dean Dr. Roger Kangas headed the meeting at Fort McNair in Washington, D.C., with Omani Ambassador to the United States Moosa Hamdan al Tai and Deputy Chief of Mission Salim Mohammed al Wardi from the Embassy of Oman. Ambassador al Tai is a NESA Center alumnus and was happy to renew his ties to the Center. Topics during the discussion included updates for ongoing and scheduled NESA Center programs in Oman and opportunities for further cooperation in strategic studies and education. Professor Dr. Gawdat Bahgat, Professor Dr. Hassan Abbas, Associate Dean Charles Marks, Associate Professor Dan Curfiss, and Professor Richard Wiersema joined Dr. Kangas for the spirited two-hour engagement. <https://nesa-center.org/nesa-center-hosts-a-roundtable-discussion-with-omani-ambassador-to-the-united-states-moosa-hamdan-al-tai>

The NESA Center Hosts Omani Ambassador for a Roundtable 18 August 2022



Ambassador al Tai from Oman (on the left) engaging with Professor Dr. Bahgat, who coordinated the meeting.

NESA Faculty & Staff Engagement

Dr. Hassan Abbas

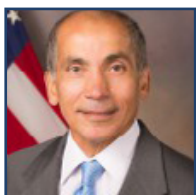


16 August 2022 – Signed up for a new book on the Taliban to be published in Spring 2023 by Yale University Press. <https://www.thebookseller.com/rights/yup-acquires-incisive-and-timely-account-of-the-new-taliban-by-abbas>

16 August 2022 – The CATO Institute hosted a virtual conversation with the Middle East and foreign policy experts on the Taliban and its control of the government in Afghanistan. About 215 people joined live. Dr. Abbas (and the panelists) discussed the origins and evolution of the Taliban, the group's political ideology, and current U.S. policy toward Afghanistan, as well as the U.S. withdrawal from the country. Event Page: <https://www.c-span.org/video/?522358-1/cato-institute-discussion-afghanistan-taliban> Video & Closed Captions: <https://www.c-span.org/video/?522358-1/cato-institute-discussion-afghanistan-taliban>

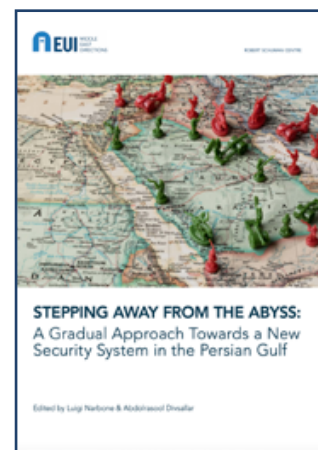


Dr. Gawdat Bahgat



27 July 2022 – Wrote an article for the Middle East Institute, co-authored by Abdolrasool Divsallar, Ph.D., titled "Israel's new Iran strategy complicates regional security." <https://www.mei.edu/publications/israels-new-iran-strategy-complicates-regional-security>

30 June 2022 – The book "Stepping Away From the Abyss: A Gradual Approach Towards a New Security System in the Persian Gulf," to which Dr. Bahgat contributed a chapter, has received considerable attention from the academic and policy community, being downloaded 5,094 times, reviewed by academic journals, and introduced through several panel discussions across U.S., Europe, Gulf, Iran, and Russia. It was first published in May 2021 and is currently being translated from English into Arabic.



<https://cadmus.eui.eu/handle/1814/71221>

David Des Roches



1 August 2022 – Published article (co-authored by Jackson Embrey) on the impact of the Russian Ukraine war on the conflict in the Middle East for European Eye on Radicalization (EER) titled "Implications From the Russian Invasion of Ukraine on Conflict in the Middle East." EER is a major thought leader in the field of radicalization and terrorism. This article is a follow-up to a presentation Professor Des Roches gave at the start of June 2022. <https://eeradicalization.com/implications-for-the-russian-invasion-of-ukraine-on-conflict-in-the-middle-east>

1 August 2022 – Was invited as an expert for commentary on the killing of al Zawahiri. The commentary was included in a live broadcast which was later added to a write-up article and video for Al Jazeera English. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/8/2/al-zawahiri-from-cairo-doctor-to-al-qaeda-leader>

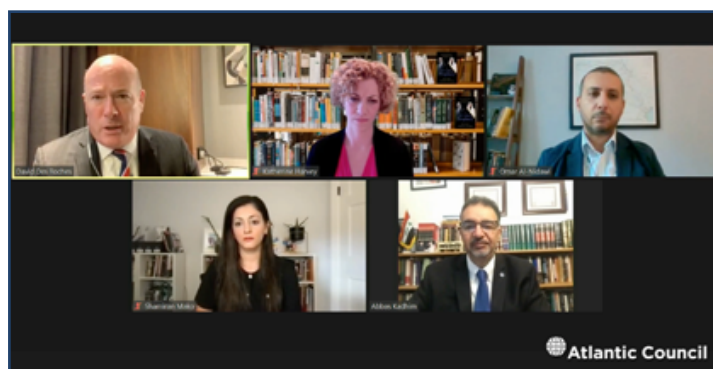
8 August 2022 – Published an article on the future of the Middle East Air Defense for Middle East Institute (MEI). Professor Des Roches looks at future trends for regional air defense, a major focus of President Biden's recent trip.

NESA Faculty & Staff Engagement

<https://www.mei.edu/publications/we-need-it-yesterday-air-defense-missile-sales-period-maximum-demand>



18 August 2022 – Was invited to the Atlantic Council as part of a panel to discuss the security aspects of Iraq’s political crisis and its role in the wider region. Professor Des Roches noted that Iraq is too big to ignore or isolate and that the GCC states had tried to isolate Iraq but have recently included Iraq in regional groupings to include the Jeddah summit with President Biden. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=asqXsFz07_M



Ali Ahmad Jalali

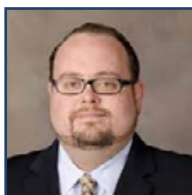


27–30 July 2022 – Gave the Keynote Speech at the Institute of Cultural Diplomacy (ICD) annual conference in Berlin. This year’s theme was “The Challenges Facing Democracy Today.” It was attended by more than 150 participants from many countries and ICD Academy Graduate Students. Professor Jalali’s keynote speech was on The Failure of De-

mocracy in Afghanistan, a review of the Taliban rule and its implications for the region and beyond. https://www.culturaldiplomacy.org/academy/index.php?en_wfdp-2022_overview View Photos: <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjA1JbU>



Jeffrey Payne



11–12 July 2022 – The NESA Center and the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) co-hosted a digital forum that examined how nuclear powers interpret and engage throughout the Indian Ocean Region. The event was led by the RUSI located in London, UK. Participants numbered approximately 30 and hailed from 10 different countries. The NESA Center was represented by Dr. Kangas, Dr. Abbas, Professor Gill, and Professor Payne. This event is part of an ongoing partnership with RUSI that focuses on developments among nuclear powers in the Indian Ocean Region.



14–16 July 2022 – Presented a paper on how Maritime Security Progress in Southeast Asia and the Bay of Bengal could serve as inspiration for the Gulf Maritime Security. The paper was presented at the Gulf Research Meeting that took place in Cambridge, UK. Professor Payne was a part of Workshop 2: “Gulf States and the Indo-Pacific: Agents or Objects of Geopolitical Competition?” Professor Des Roches served as Chair for another workshop in the meeting. <https://grmvirtual.gulfresearchmeeting.net>

NESA Alumni Activities & Contributions

Total Center NESA Alumni: 11,732

Total Countries: 136

Visit the NESA Center Alumni Interactive Map:

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



NESA Upcoming Events

North Africa Senior Leaders Workshop (also includes WPS) | 7–14 September 2022 | Washington, DC

SSN: South Asia Media & National Security Workshop | 11–13 September 2022 | Lahore, Pakistan

Combating Transnational Threats Senior Executive Seminar 03-22 | 12–16 September 2022 | Washington, DC

Turkmenistan Strategic Dialogue | 12–16 September 2022 | Turkmenistan

NESA Security in the Mediterranean Basin Seminar | 12–16 September 2022 | Rabat, Morocco

Washington Seminar | 21 September 2022 | Washington, DC

RSADF Executive Leadership Program | 25 September–4 October 2022 | Washington, DC

USF-NESA-CENTCOM 6th GPC Conference | 27–28 September 2022 | Tampa, Florida

**Near East South Asia (NESA)
Center for Strategic Studies**

Fort Lesley J. McNair
National Defense University
Abraham Lincoln Hall
300 5th Ave SW
Washington, DC 20319-5066

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

NESA-Center.org

Building Relationships



Enhancing Security

 NESACenter

 @TheNESACenter

 Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies

 GlobalNETPlatform.org/NESA

 Communications@NESA-Center.org