



# NESA Center Executive Seminar: Maritime Security in the NESA Region & Beyond

Report/Executive Summary

February 2023

Submitted by Jeffrey Payne, Assistant Professor, NESA Center

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

From 30 January to 10 February, the Near East South Asia (NESA) Center for Strategic Studies conducted an Executive Seminar focused on the maritime domain and the challenges/threats that exist there. The seminar's proceedings included conversations on autonomous/unmanned systems, the maritime challenges associated with climate change and environmental degradation, transnational criminality, power projection and competition within the maritime domain, and maritime domain awareness, among others. Admiral Paparo, Commander of United States Pacific Fleet, provided opening remarks for the seminar with the farewell address provided by Admiral (ret.) Foggo, former Commander of United States Naval Forces Europe-Africa. Participants hailed from twenty-four countries and represented navies, coast guards, defense ministries, and diplomatic corps, among others. NESA's Jeff Payne led the seminar with facilitation provided by Professor David Des Roches and Professor Gawdat Bahgat. The event was conducted digitally to assist in casting the widest possible net for participation.

The course was organized around the following objectives:

- A more comprehensive understanding of the maritime challenges present throughout the world, but with a particular focus on the NESA Region and the wider Indo-Pacific.
- A deeper understanding of the benefits of adapting new technologies and investing in information sharing mechanisms to advance maritime security.
- A better understanding of how the United States views the maritime domain, the security threats present there, and how maritime policy is created.
- A greater grasp of how the private sector, NGOs, and academic institutions are shaping naval, maritime law enforcement, and maritime transportation processes.
- Finally, a better vision of what challenges remain over the horizon when it comes to securing our oceans.

## **THEMES:**

The following themes and/or questions were routinely mentioned among speakers and participants during the event.

- The challenges of climate change emerged routinely throughout the seminar with an overt pessimistic perspective. There was little hope of a near-term breakthrough for a global consensus to counter climate change. There was little belief that the challenges of fisheries collapse, sea level rise, and other maritime-related elements of climate change will be universal policy areas of concern for policymakers. Questions and comments pertaining to climate were primarily focused on ways to make small progress and means of mitigating damage.
- There were ongoing questions about how to build both capacity and capability. Regional states in the NESA AOR often need greater capacity – more tools, assets, and instruments they can use to better secure their waters. There was also recognition that capability enhancement – the process where the maritime community of a state can use what they already possess to greater efficacy – is often overlooked. This discussion flowed through several panels and submitted assignments.
- The effectiveness of rules and norms to maintain maritime security was routinely discussed. Commitment to various institutional formats, whether multilateral, regional, or even unilateral, remains strong, but there were questions as to how to ensure that the rules, norms, and even laws that protect our waters can be enhanced. Do international agreements, such as UNCLOS, need to be revisited to better address new threats and fill in revealed gaps? Do larger maritime powers need to provide more public goods and greater commitment to global maritime security? Does the maritime community need to be a better advocate to draw attention to the threats facing it? If so, then what is the best form of advocacy to pursue?
- The diversity of the maritime community also was an issue of discussion. How well are coastal communities tied into government processes? How much coordination exists between private corporations, research/academic institutions, fishing communities, and government agencies? How routinely are the perspectives, contributions, and presence of minority voices integrated, particularly regarding gender? There were clear statements that too many voices that could offer novel ideas for the wider maritime security community were not being integrated.
- Interstate competition was a specter that emerged routinely throughout the seminar. How will competition amongst major powers impact smaller maritime nations? How does the international community respond to states, such as Iran, which commonly exploit the grey zone to inflame regional tensions at sea? Are the institutions we rely upon and the cooperation built amongst nations resilient enough to counter and diminish the impact of irresponsible state actors? Overall, there were ideas presented that maritime security exists in a period of greater geopolitical instability and to better respond we need more cooperation and more trust.

- Related to the above theme is the question of trust – specifically, maritime security is impossible without cooperation and cooperation is virtually impossible without trust. Trust issues throughout maritime security institutions and organizations remain, whether due to interstate concerns, siloed bureaucracy, or a fear of revealing sensitive operational information. Some questions posited that technology innovation may help the community build greater trust. Others pointed out that real commitment to multilateral, regional, and international mechanisms is essential.
- Transnational crime, particularly pertaining to smuggling and IUU-F, were common focal points for questions. The discussion flowed between mechanisms to eradicate these threats and the best ways of mitigating their impact. Maritime criminality was tied to better enforcement of international legal mechanisms, enhancing operations of national maritime security services, and greater interoperability among partners and neighbors (Shiprider agreements, etc.).
- The commercial revolution in space was a topic of interest for many participants. The diminished costs associated with deploying low-earth orbit satellites has in turn led to more commercial interests around the world seeking to gain a market share of this growing industry. Discussions on space focused not only on how policy towards the space domain is developing among countries, but how the technology being deployed in orbit ties to other terrestrial technology systems and can provide more relevant data for maritime security.
- Technology beyond that deployed to space was also of interest during the seminar. In the maritime security community, various experiments that seek to harness unmanned/autonomous assets with more advanced buoys and sensors interface with traditional security institutions and systems. How will these advances impact the future of maritime security? Is technological development a signal of new tools to secure our oceans, a new means by which interstate competition will play out, a new tool set for illicit actors and criminal elements, or a combination of all three?
- Information sharing is increasingly tied to developing technology. The advances in data accumulation over the past two decades has transformed how we can view the maritime domain. The data that can be acquired by all maritime security institutions has the ability presently to improve humanitarian assistance/disaster relief operations, search and rescue operations, and maritime domain awareness. Yet, harnessing this new data does not provide a comprehensive picture for any actor if pursued in isolation. The data at our fingertips has further exposed the necessity of intensified information sharing.
- Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) and Underwater Domain Awareness (UDA) are buzzwords among maritime security professionals. MDA is an established concept that many seafaring nations accept as necessary for maritime security. UDA remains a hazier concept that states are only now discussing in-depth.

- Workforce/Personnel Sustainment was discussed in-depth in a session on the U.S. Navy's aims and operations. Attracting personnel into maritime services is a challenge for many state actors, as is sustaining that workforce. The concept of a healthy maritime workforce is an objective of all littoral states, but the challenge comes in the form of policymaker advocacy, budget limitations, professional standards, and public support.
- Finally, questions during the seminar routinely mentioned maritime activities that fit the grey zone moniker. These activities, designed to strain legitimate maritime activity, fall short of a scale warranting conflict, but place a burden upon naval and maritime law enforcement forces to ensure freedom of navigation. Can grey zone actions be adequately countered? Are existing tactics, strategies, agreements, and norms sufficient for inflicting costs upon actors who employ such measures? The consensus implicit in the questions asked and discussions had is that eliminating the presence of grey zone threats is what we all want, but it is likely that the best options currently available point towards mitigation.
- Topics pertaining to maritime security that were not overtly discussed but participants recommended for future iterations included food security, port/coastal infrastructure security, the private shipping industry and overall maritime supply chain, anti-submarine warfare, support hub and logistical agreements, and policy efforts related to Women, Peace, and Security goals. Food security is a regional problem in the NESA area of responsibility and many of the complications are related to maritime trade and freedom of navigation. The fragility of the global maritime supply chain was revealed in abundance during the pandemic with the flashpoint of the Ever Given incident in the Suez Canal. Port topics, from securing them from various threats (non-state actors, cyber threats, and illegal trade) to modernizing port procedures in the region, are an interagency hurdle for many regional states. Anti-submarine warfare, while remaining a sensitive issue for many countries, is an issue of greater international interest due to strategic competition. Finally, the international effort pertaining to Women, Peace, and Security programming, while discussed in the event in limited ways, can and should be an overt topic of its own in future iterations.
- Additional topics discussed by participants that should be highlighted are how non-littoral states perceive, approach, and assist in efforts for maritime security. The health and safety of our waters are not only of interest to coastal states. Likewise, future iterations of the program should address how regional states view the health of existing international efforts, the impact of emerging geostrategic concepts, and the trends of major power activity. This could be discussed through a historical lens and bring up the legacies of colonialism, from a capacity lens relating to the divide between major and minor maritime actors, or even how regional actors can navigate the plethora of institutions, organizations, and efforts that are being stood up relevant to the maritime domain.
- Finally, participants rightfully pointed out regional perspectives that matter immensely to the security of our oceans, as well as the development of the wider NESA region and Indo-Pacific. The U.S., for instance, is not the only maritime power seeking to uphold

the rules and norms of the international order and the U.S. approach may often not be the correct approach to regional challenges. International cooperation efforts in the maritime domain cannot and should not be a one-size-fits-all model. In fact, such efforts are often successful because various countries can lend specific capabilities or niche capabilities to wider efforts. Less developed states also must measure the necessity of receiving various forms of capacity building efforts and capability enhancement programs from larger actors (who may be competing with each other) with the reality that various actors around the world are seeking to undermine established rules and norms. These perspectives all point to the absolute necessity for more routine and deeper conversations amongst all maritime actors to both learn from each other and to gain greater familiarity with their national interests.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

- In future iterations of the course, NESA should include panels or elements of panels that address issues relating to port security, food security, maritime supply chains, support hubs and other security-related agreements, perspectives from non-littoral states, greater representation by non-traditional voices involved in maritime security, and Women, Peace, and Security efforts.
- Maritime security related programs in the future should be in-person if possible to facilitate more demonstrations of developing maritime security methodologies, possible site visits, and tabletop exercises.
- If future iterations are performed digitally, then the timing should be more carefully considered. Either host at a time that is less complicated for participants, or potentially shorten the length of the course by making each meeting day longer.

## WORKSHOP RECORD:

### Monday, 30 January 2023

- 0730–0815    **Registration Time**
- 0800        **Course Begins**
- 0800–0815    **Course Director’s Welcome**  
Speaker: *Mr. Jeff Payne, Assistant Professor, NESA Center for Strategic Studies*
- 0815–0845    **Deputy Director and Academic Dean’s Welcome**  
Speakers:  
*COL (ret) David Lamm, Deputy Director, NESA Center for Strategic Studies*  
*Dr. Roger Kangas, Academic Dean, NESA Center for Strategic Studies*

- 0845–0900 Break
- 0900–1015 **Session 01: The State of Our Seas**  
Moderator: *Dr. Gawdat Bahgat, Professor, NESA Center for Strategic Studies*  
Speaker:  
*VADM Pradeep Chauhan, Director General, National Maritime Foundation*
- 1015–1045 **Alumni and Media & Communications Brief**  
Speaker: *Gillian Hurtt, Education Technology Specialist, NESA Center for Strategic Studies*
- 1045 Conclusion of Day

**Tuesday, 31 January 2023**

- 0630–0700 **Online Check in, Networking Session**
- 0700–0845 **Session 02: The NESA Region – Views on State Actors**  
Moderator: *Mr. Jeff Payne, Assistant Professor, NESA Center*  
Speakers:  
*Dr. Gawdat Bahgat, Professor, NESA Center for Strategic Studies*  
*Professor David Des Roches, Associate Professor, NESA Center for Strategic Studies*  
*Dr. Hassan Abbas, Distinguished Professor of International Relations, NESA Center for Strategic Studies*
- 0845–0900 Break
- 0900–1015 **Session 03: NESA Region Waters – Views from NAVCENT’s TF 59**  
Moderator: *Mr. Jeff Payne, Assistant Professor, NESA Center*  
Speaker:  
*Commodore Michael D. Brasseur, Commander, Task Force 59, U.S. NAVCENT*
- 1015–1030 Introduction for Welcome Session
- 1030–1100 Break
- 1100–1145 **Welcome Session – Questions and Answers with Admiral Paparo, Commander, United States Pacific Fleet**  
Moderator: *Mr. Jeff Payne, Assistant Professor, NESA Center*  
Speaker:  
*Admiral Samuel J. Paparo, Commander, United States Pacific Fleet*
- 1145 Conclusion of Day

**Wednesday, 1 February 2023**

0630–0700 **Online Check in, Networking Session**

0700–0830 **Session 04: The Sea and Strategic Competition**

Moderator: *Mr. Jeff Payne, Assistant Professor, NESA Center for Strategic Studies*

Speakers:

*Mr. Gregory B. Poling, Senior Fellow for Southeast Asia and Director, Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative, CSIS*

*Dr. Collin Koh, Research Fellow, Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies*

0830–0845 Break

0845–1000 **Session 05: The Maritime Domain and Threats from WMDs**

Moderator: *Professor David Des Roches, Associate Professor, NESA Center for Strategic Studies*

Speaker:

*Mr. Brendan G. Melley, Director, Center for the Study of Weapons of Mass Destruction, National Defense University*

*Dr. Justin Anderson, Senior Policy Fellow, Center for the Study of Weapons of Mass Destruction, National Defense University*

1000–1015 **Review of Digital Activity 1**

**Digital Activity 1 – DKI APCSS Presentation and Written Response**

- This activity requires participants to watch a recorded video session with experts from the Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies that focuses on the maritime challenges present and U.S. policy towards the Indo-Pacific, with an emphasis on the Pacific Ocean. Upon watching the video, participants are asked to write a 250-word response to the views presented – specifically, how the U.S. positions they discussed impact your own country’s maritime security, national security outlook and interpretation of U.S. emphasis on the Indo-Pacific.
- Participants will receive instructions on how to access the video via GlobalNet and all responses can be sent to the course lead, Jeff Payne, either internally through GlobalNet or to [jeffrey.payne.civ@ndu.edu](mailto:jeffrey.payne.civ@ndu.edu).

1015 Conclusion of Day

**Thursday, 2 February 2023**

0630–0700 **Online Check in, Networking Session**

0700–0845 **Session 06: The Maritime Domain from Orbit**

Moderator: *Dr. Gawdat Bahgat, Professor, NESA Center for Strategic Studies*



Speakers:

*Ms. Grace Kim, Space Policy Advisor, Office of the Secretary of Defense (Policy)*

0845–0900 Break

0900–1030 **Session 07: Views from International Organizations**

Moderator: *Professor David Des Roches, Associate Professor, NESA Center for Strategic Studies*

Speakers:

*Mr. Raj Mohabeer, Maritime Security Lead, General Secretariat, Indian Ocean Commission*

*Mr. Giuseppe Sernia, Programme Officer, Global Maritime Crime Programme, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime*

1030 Conclusion of Day

**Friday, 3 February 2023**

0630–0700 **Online Check in, Networking Session**

0700–0815 **Session 08: IUU-F and the Progress being Made**

Moderator: *Professor David Des Roches, Associate Professor, NESA Center for Strategic Studies*

Speaker:

*Mr. Gunther Errhalt, Maritime Security and IUU-F Consultant*

0815–0830 Break

0830–1015 **Session 09: Maritime Security Trends**

Moderator: *Mr. Jeff Payne, Assistant Professor, NESA Center for Strategic Studies*

Speakers:

*Ms. Nilanthi Samaranayake, Director, Strategy and Policy Analysis Program, CNA*

*Mr. Jay Benson, Director, Stable Seas*

1000 Conclusion of Day

**Monday, 6 February 2023**

0730–0800 **Online Check in, Networking Session**

0800–0900 **Special Session – Joint Interagency Task Force - West**

Moderator: *Mr. Jeff Payne, Assistant Professor, NESA Center for Strategic Studies*



Speaker: **Mr. James J.D. Ink**, Deputy Director/Senior Law Enforcement Officer,  
Joint Interagency Task Force West (JIATF-West)

0900–1000 **Session 10: Game Changing Technological Tools?**  
Moderator: **Dr. Gawdat Bahgat**, Professor, NESA Center for Strategic Studies  
Speaker:  
**Dr. Jared Dunnmon**, Technical Director - Artificial Intelligence/Machine  
Learning, Defense Innovation Unit (DIU)

1000–1015 Break

1015–1130 **Session 11: Networking the Seas with Technology**  
Moderator: **Mr. Jeff Payne**, Assistant Professor, NESA Center for Strategic  
Studies  
Speakers:  
**Mr. James McAden**, Senior Director, Hawkeye 360  
**Ms. Gina Fiore**, Officer, Pew Charitable Trust

1130 Conclusion of Day

### **Tuesday, 7 February 2023**

0630–0700 **Online Check in, Networking Session**

0800–0900 **Session 12: A Look at the Eastern Mediterranean**  
Moderator: **Mr. Jeff Payne**, Assistant Professor, NESA Center for Strategic  
Studies  
Speaker:  
**LTG (ret) Terry Wolff**, Director, NESA Center for Strategic Studies  
(Backup from Payne, Des Roches, and Bahgat)

0900–0915 Break

0915–1030 **Session 13: The Western Indian Ocean**  
Moderator: **Professor David Des Roches**, Associate Professor, NESA Center for  
Strategic Studies  
Speakers:  
**Dr. Assis Malaquias**, Dean, Africa Center for Strategic Studies

1030 Conclusion of Day

### **Wednesday, 8 February 2023**

0630–0700 **Online Check in, Networking Session**

0700–0830 **Session 14: Perspectives from Europe**

Moderator: *Dr. Gawdat Bahgat, Professor, NESA Center for Strategic Studies*

Speakers:

*Mr. Martin Cauchi Inglott, Project Director, CRIMARIO II, European Union*

*Dr. Timothy Edmunds, Co-Director, SafeSeas and Professor of International Security, University of Bristol*

0830–0845 Break

0845–1000 **Session 15: Perspectives from the U.S. Navy/Maritime Community**

Moderator: *Mr. Jeff Payne, Assistant Professor, NESA Center for Strategic Studies*

Speakers:

*Mr. Scott Cheney-Peters, National Maritime Intelligence-Integration Office*

*Ms. Anne Gebhards, Senior Advisor for International Affairs, U.S. Department of the Navy*

1000 Highlighting Topical Conversation on 9<sup>th</sup>; Conclusion of Day

### **Thursday, 9 February 2023**

0630–0700 **Online Check in, Networking Session**

0700–0830 **Session 16: Maritime Law**

Moderator: *Professor David Des Roches, Associate Professor, NESA Center for Strategic Studies*

Speaker:

*Dr. Ian Ralby, Founder, I.R. Consilium*

0830–0845 Break

0845–0930 **Topical Conversation: The Undersea Domain**

Moderator: *Dr. Gawdat Bahgat, Professor, NESA Center for Strategic Studies*

Speaker:

*Mr. Jeff Payne, Assistant Professor, NESA Center for Strategic Studies*

0930 Conclusion of Day

### **Friday, 10 February 2023**

0630–0700 **Online Check in, Networking Session**

0700–0745 **Session 17: A Course Review and Insights from NESA Faculty (a Roundtable of Observations)**

Moderator: *Mr. Jeff Payne, Assistant Professor, NESA Center for Strategic Studies*

Speakers:

*Professor David Des Roches, Associate Professor, NESA Center for Strategic Studies*

*Dr. Gawdat Bahgat, Professor, NESA Center for Strategic Studies*

0745–0800 Break

**0800–0900 Session 18: The Maritime Dimensions of the War in Ukraine**

Moderator: *Mr. Jeff Payne, Assistant Professor, NESA Center for Strategic Studies*

Speaker:

*Admiral (USN, Ret.) James G. Foggo, Dean, Center for Maritime Strategy, Navy League of the United States and former Commander of United States Naval Forces Europe-Africa*

**0900–0915 Academic Dean’s Farewell**

Speaker: *Dr. Roger Kangas, Academic Dean, NESA Center for Strategic Studies*

**0915–0930 Deputy Director’s Farewell**

Speaker: *COL David Lamm, USA (Ret.), Deputy Director, NESA Center for Strategic Studies*

**0930–0945 Course Director’s Farewell**

Speaker: *Mr. Jeff Payne, Assistant Professor, NESA Center for Strategic Studies*

**0945 Course Conclusion and Farewell Announcements**



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