

Border Security and Regional Cooperation Workshop



Border Security participants engaged in a dynamic group dialogue on narcotics and human trafficking.

TUNIS, Tunisia– July 10-14, 2017– The Near East South Asia (NESAs) Center for Strategic Studies in partnership with U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) and Sandia National Laboratory conducted a workshop on ‘Border Security and Regional Cooperation: Countering Drugs, Guns and Terrorists.’

This one-week, high-intensity workshop was designed to provide a venue for discussion and foster recommendations relevant to addressing border security challenges in North Africa and the Sahel. The focus was a coordinated approach looking at triad of strategy; personnel; and technology. NESAs Professor Anne Moisan, who led the workshop, directed participants towards a “smarter” use of personnel and the ability to leverage low-cost, low-technology solutions for surveillance in order to complement border strategy and personnel assets.

Critical to the success of border management is regional cooperation and collaboration as well as the exchange of information and intelligence among national security sector professionals. Likewise, enhanced regional cooperation on borders with joint patrols/exchanges, burden sharing proposals, as well as broader global approaches were proposed as positive steps to regional cooperation. Participants were encouraged to candidly share their own experiences guiding national and regional initiatives, best practices, and lessons learned in broader open discussions.

As part of their working group, participants addressed the evolving nature of securing borders; the security challenges posed by porous borders; regional border threats, capabilities and gaps; integrating security systems with strategy, personnel and technology; and the roles of the U.S. Embassy Teams, USAFRICOM and the Department of Energy’s laboratories such as Sandia Labs, in assisting the development of country strategies. Several practicum sessions were held focusing specifically on identification of training requirements and the best approach to equipment acquisition, as well as the national threat of narcotics, arms and human trafficking as they apply to management of borders.

28 senior professionals from Africa attended the workshop. Several regional security and counter-narcotics professionals including Mr. Joseph Gabor, Senior Special Agent/Liaison Officer, Drug Enforcement Administration, U.S. Department of Justice; LTC John Mitchell, Special Operations, USAFRICOM; SSG Matthew Schafer, Intelligence Analyst, National Guard Bureau, Wyoming National Guard; and Dr. Amir Mohagheghi and Mr. Jeffrey Hoaglund, Global Engineered Security Systems, Cooperative Monitoring Center, Sandia National Laboratories guided multiple critical border security and cooperation based discussions.

Building Relationships– Enhancing Security

Air Command and Staff College Seminar



ACSC students listening to a session on the Arab-Israeli conflict.

WASHINGTON— July 17, 2017— International students from the Air University's Air Command and Staff College (ACSC) attended a one-day NESA Center seminar, led by NESA Professor Dr. Gawdat Bahgat, which focused on crucial conflicts and vital issues of global consequence.



Deputy Director Lamm (2nd from R) in a group discussion.

The active participation of 72 senior military officers from over 65 countries was a testament to practicality and purpose of the NESA Center's annual course held for students of the ACSC.

NESA Deputy Director David Lamm opened the discussion about the nature of the war in Afghanistan as well as the hopes and challenges that lie ahead for the country as it approaches

parliamentary and presidential elections in the next few years.

In between moderating the discourse and the panels, Dr. Bahgat offered a survey of various security challenges and threats to lasting stability faced by the many countries within the NESA region.

Associate Professor Daniel Curfiss discussed the Arab-Israeli conflict and the complex realities the peace process has previously faced and will continue to face moving forward. ACSC students also received the opportunity to brief the conference on their own thoughts, as well as their hopes and challenges for the region.

Participants left the conference with new insights and perspectives, as they interacted in both classroom style discussions and smaller group dialogues.



Professor Gawdat Bahgat lecturing to students.

Building Relationships— Enhancing Security

Air War College Seminar



Air War College students listening on during a session.

WASHINGTON– July 7, 2017– The NESA Center held a one-day seminar focusing on international security affairs for over 50 students of the Air War College (AWC).



NESA Dean Kangas during the keynote.

The Air War College is a university component of the U.S. Air Force stressing educational focus on air, space, and cyberspace, in order to process the next set of strategic national security leaders.

Building upon collaborative relationships with partner Department of Defense Regional Centers, the NESA Center enlisted the expertise of the William J. Perry Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies (CHDS) and the Africa Center for Strategic Studies (ACSS) to provide AWC students an in-depth review on comparative security challenges in the Middle East, Latin America.

The seminar was led by NESA Dean Dr. Roger Kangas, who provided a keynote on the Russian political landscape that influences its position as a global security actor. Dr. David Spencer, Associate Professor at CHDS led a session on the security risks and transnational crimes in Latin America, examining the objectives of criminalized states an in-detailed overview of the Colombian peace process. Dr. Raymond Gilpin, Dean of Academic Affairs at ACSS focused his presentation on challenges that African countries have in maintaining border security and extremism.

NESA Professors Dr. Jennifer Jefferis and Dr. Gawdat Bahgat presented on security challenges in the Middle East, particularly looking at the decline of Daesh’s influence in Syria and Iraq and the regional power dynamic between Iran and Saudi Arabia.



ACSS Dean giving a presentation to students.



Professor Spencer speaking with a participant after his session.

Building Relationships– Enhancing Security



Next Generation Working Group



Next Generation participants during one of their many roundtable discussions.

WASHINGTON– July 24-28, 2017– As part of NESA’s initiative to incorporate and cultivate ideas from youth leaders within the Near East and South Asia, the Center held its annual working group session so that the ‘Next Generation’ regional leaders could present solutions of complex regional crises to key U.S. policymakers.



Next Generation participants take a group photo inside the U.S. Senate Building.

Seven research and academic professionals from the NESA region and diaspora (Australia, Austria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, France, and the Philippines) were present as part of the ‘Next Generation’ dialogue.

The working group, led by NESA Manager of Academic Affairs Jeffrey Payne, presented their analysis on the stability and outlook of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), Central and South Asia (CASA), and South East Asia (SEA) to senior

leadership of the National Defense University, the office for Countering Violent Extremism at the State Department, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for the Middle East, Brigadier General Joseph Rank, as well as several members of Congress and staffers within the Senate Committees on Foreign Relations, Homeland Security, and Intelligence.

U.S.-Russia Dialogue

BERLIN, Germany– July 19-21, 2017– The NESA Center in coordination with the Middle East Institute and the Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC) hosted the third working group of the “Middle East Dialogue.”

NESA Academic Dean Dr. Roger Kangas, attended the talks in an effort to continue progress made upon the previous two Track-II dialogues, which took place in July 2016, and February 2017. RIAC Director General was in attendance as well.

As a means of working outside of official channels, these Track II programs allow practitioners and experts from the U.S. and Russia an opportunity to discuss and converge their opinions on the unresolved tensions apparent within the Syrian Civil War.

During the three day dialogue, the working group discussed the need to limit violent unrest on all sides and search for a political solution instead, evaluate whether U.S.-Russian cooperation within the conflict is possible and identify core problems and solutions for all factions.

Building Relationships– Enhancing Security

U.S. Army-Saudi Arabian Ministry of Interior Training



U.S. Army soldiers take a group photo inside the National Defense University.

WASHINGTON— July 17-20, 2017— 15 members of the U.S. Army , a combination of both enlisted soldiers and officers, attended the NESA Center’s training course in preparation for their next assignment to the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Interior-Military Assistance Group (MOI-MAG).

The one-week course, led by NESA Professor David DesRoches, gave U.S. Army participants a cursory overview of necessary cultural and historical information to successfully carry out their mission while in Saudi Arabia.

Participants were briefed on important topics including the history of U.S.-Saudi relations, the Saudi Arabian MOI, the Saudi Arabian economy and the role women play, the oil industry from the perspective of ARAMCO, Saudi Arabian security assistance, and a comprehensive lecture on the etiquettes of living in Saudi Arabian society.

Various country and regional experts, including former NESA Director, Ambassador James Larocco, Senior Resident Scholar at the Arab Gulf States Institute, Dr. Karen Young, and former Ambassador to Yemen, Steven Seche presented their perspectives and offered advice to U.S. Army participants as well.

Upcoming NESA Center Events

CENTCOM Strategic Survey
August 7-11

Afghanistan-Pakistan Strategic Dialogue
August 7-18

Central Asia Security Seminar
August 21-25

Capstone AFRICOM Dialogue
August 21-25

Faculty Publications

Baltrusaitis, Daniel. 2017. “Cyber War: Do We Have the Right Mindset?” SpringerLink.

Building Relationships— Enhancing Security