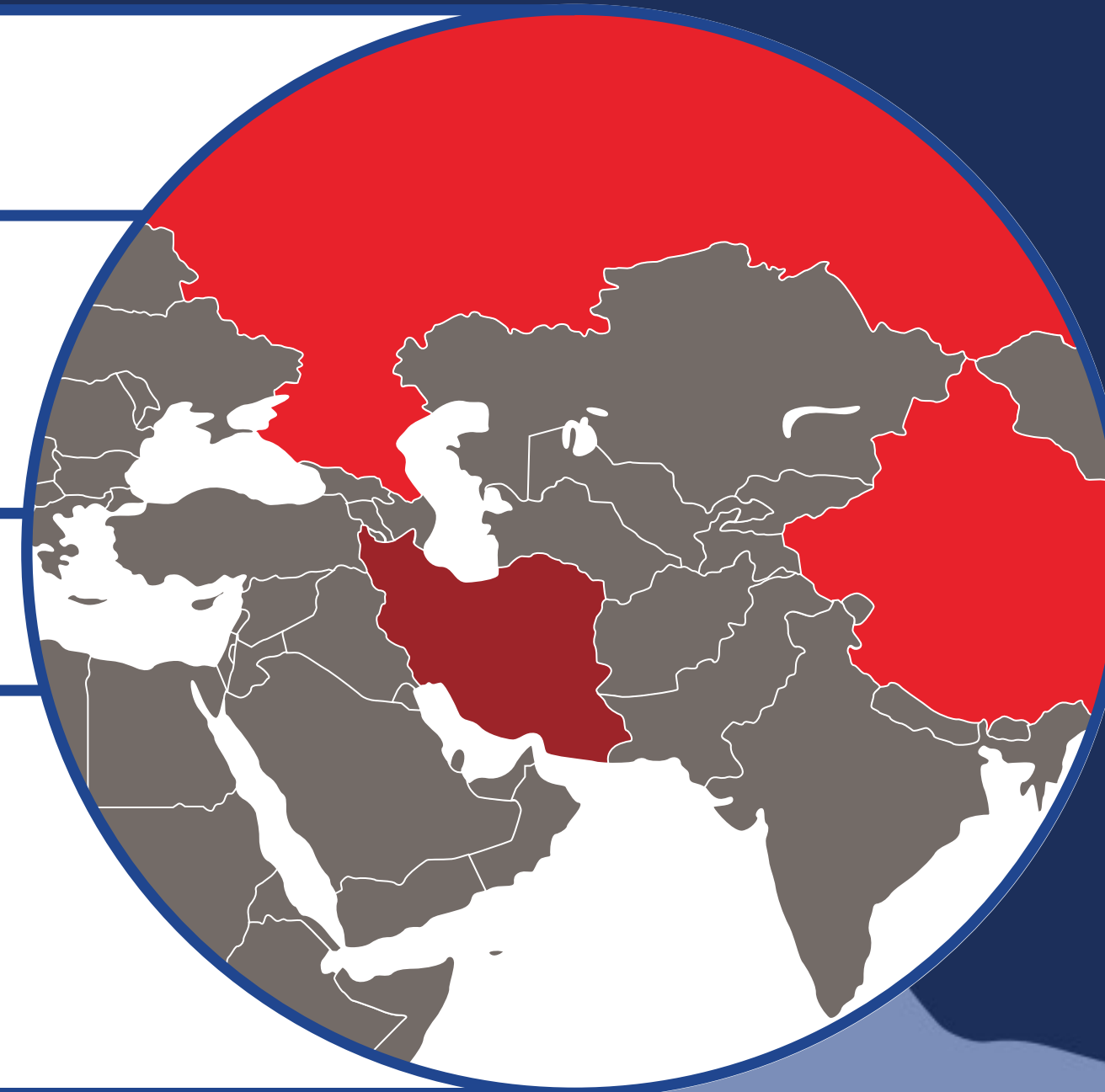


# THE GREAT POWER COMPETITION

A focus on the Great Power Competition in the Central Region to provide a broader understanding of the challenges the U.S. faces in the 21st Century.



## **CONTAGION EFFECT: RADICALIZATION, UNREST, AND COMPETITION IN THE COVID-19 ERA**

The 2nd conference in the GPC Conference Series will consider how the COVID-19 pandemic will impact U.S. military readiness, reach, and effectiveness as well as expand current considerations of popular unrest, radicalization, violent extremism, information and influence operations, and new capabilities in recognizing and preparing for other black swan events.



UNIVERSITY of  
**SOUTH FLORIDA**

**THE GREAT POWER  
COMPETITION  
CONFERENCE SERIES**

The University of South Florida (USF), in collaboration with the National Defense University Near East South Asia (NESA) Center for Strategic Studies, will hold a series of conferences focused on the Great Power Competition in the Central Region to provide a broader understanding of the challenges facing the United States in the 21st Century.

[READ MORE](#)

## **THE USF-NESA COLLABORATION**

The USF-NESA Collaboration leads the initiative on the Great Power Competition Conference. The Near East South Asia (NESA) Center for Strategic Studies is the primary U.S. Department of Defense Regional Center that focuses on enhancing security cooperation between the U.S. and partners in the Near East and South Asia (NESA) region. The NESA team leverages practitioner and academic experience to provide a collaborative space for policymakers to discuss security strategies and cultivate relationships. Its vision is a secure, prosperous NESA region, committed to collaborative, inclusive security and whole-of-government approaches to security and socio-political challenges.

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**ABOUT THE COLLEGE  
OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF  
SOUTH FLORIDA**

The College of Arts and Sciences is the intellectual heart of the University of South Florida. We are a community of teachers and scholars united in the belief that broadly educated people are the basis of a just, free, and prosperous society. By focusing on the big questions facing all of humanity, we prepare students for successful, socially responsible personal and professional lives. By conducting innovative, interdisciplinary research and scholarship, we advance knowledge in ways that prepare us to address complex social and scientific problems and enhance the quality of life for people and communities.

# Agenda September 16

DAY 1

GPC CONFERENCE EMCEE: DR. GARRETT POTTS, USF

## OPENING REMARKS

8:55 - 9:00	<b>WELCOME!</b> Livestream Countdown
9:00 - 9:10	<b>DR. ERIC EISENBERG</b> DEAN, COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA
9:10 - 9:25	<b>LTG (R) TERRY WOLFF</b> DIRECTOR, NEAR EAST SOUTH ASIA (NESA) CENTER FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES
9:25 - 9:45	<b>MR. TODD VEAZIE</b> DIRECTOR, STRATEGIC MULTILAYER ASSESSMENT (SMA), PENTAGON JOINT STAFF/J39
9:45 - 10:00	<b>DR. RIK LEGAULT</b> DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
10:00 - 10:15	<b>BREAK</b>
10:15 - 11:00	<b>KEYNOTE SPEAKER: LTG (R) MICHAEL NAGATA</b> FORMER DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC OPERATIONAL PLANNING FOR THE U.S. NATIONAL COUNTERTERRORISM CENTER “The Rise Of Malign Actors In The Globalized, Digital Age”
11:00 - 11:20	<b>KEYNOTE ADDRESS Q &amp; A</b>
11:20 - 11:30	<b>BREAK</b>

11:30 - 1:00

## PANEL PRESENTATION

### PANEL 1: COMPETITION FOR INFLUENCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Perception matters. This panel will discuss U.S., Chinese, Russian, and Iranian interests in the region against the backdrop of emergent change driven by technological advances, empowerment of the individual, and the weakening of the Westphalian international system. In particular, the panel will examine opportunities and risks that the ongoing response to the crisis poses for the USG and its competitors in the region.

### PANEL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. As China, Russia, Iran, and the United States compete for influence in the CENTCOM AOR, how has the perceived response of each of these actors shifted the geopolitical balance of influence in the region?
2. What are the goals of each of these competitors in the region, and how have they changed in response to the pandemic?
3. How can the USG harness disruption in the region to further its interests and objectives while preventing erosion of U.S. influence?
4. Will the pandemic affect Iranian leadership, decision calculus, and future pathways in the post-COVID period?

### MODERATOR: DR. RICHARD RUSSELL (NESA)

### PANELISTS

**LTG (R) KAREN GIBSON** DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE FOR NATIONAL SECURITY PARTNERSHIPS

**DR. MOHSEN MILANI** USF, IRAN

**DR. NIKOLAY KOZHANOV** CHATHAM HOUSE, RUSSIA

**DR. MAORONG JIANG** CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY, CHINA

1:00 - 1:30

## PANEL Q & A

1:30 - 2:15

## LUNCH

2:15 - 2:45

**PLENARY SPEAKER: MR. ROBERT JONES** Deputy J5, SOJTF

“EMBRACING UNCERTAINTY AND MITIGATING OPERATIONAL RISK: HOW TO CHANGE THE OPERATIONAL LENS”

2:45 - 4:00

**PANEL PRESENTATION**

### **PANEL 2: POPULATION DYNAMICS: UNREST & VIOLENT EXTREMISM**

This panel will address the rising tide of populism in the Middle East—characterized by popular protests calling for improved governance while rejecting sectarianism. It will question if this is a durable trend that will result in more responsive and representative governments and whether this trend could be overcome by the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic where autocratic governments take advantage of the chaos to consolidate power.

While some individuals and populations have turned to political protest to address grievances, violent extremism remains a destabilizing factor. The Central Region suffers from numerous drivers of instability, rooted in the potential for economic and political collapse, massive populations of internally displaced persons and refugees, and traumatized and aggrieved populations vulnerable to radical ideologies. This panel will explore the drivers and buffers of popular protest, violent extremism, and other expressions of grievance in the Region.

### **PANEL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. How will rising populism—rejection of sectarianism, demand for better governance, and empowerment of populations—shape the Middle East over the next five years?
2. What are the drivers of grievance in the Central Region that lead some individuals to choose violent extremism over political protest? What steps can the USG encourage to increase resilience against violent extremism?
3. How will the unfolding of the COVID-19 pandemic impact stability in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Lebanon, and Iraq? Will we see a return to increased authoritarianism and the decline of populism?

**MODERATOR: DR. LEANNE ERDBERG STEADMAN** (USIP)

### **PANELISTS**

**DR. JENNIFER JEFFERIS** (NESA), LEBANON/JORDAN

**DR. HASSAN ABBAS** (NESA), PAKISTAN

**DR. ALEXSANDRA NESIC** (JFK SPECIAL WARFARE CENTER & SCHOOL)

**DR. GAWDAT BAHGAT** (NESA)

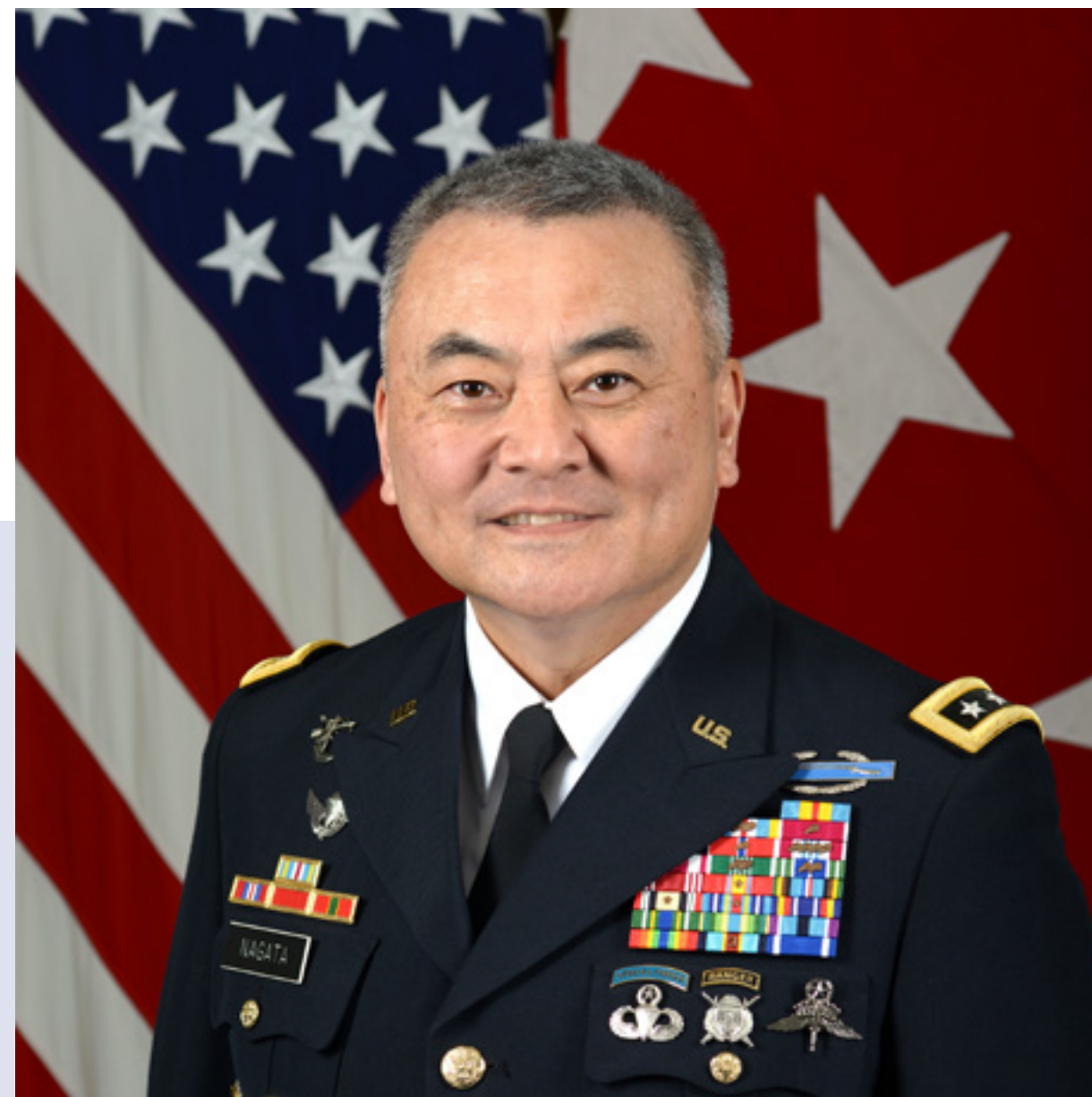
4:00 - 4:30

**PANEL Q & A**

## Keynote Speakers

**DAY 1**

### LTG (R) MICHAEL NAGATA



### Former Director of Strategic Operational Planning for the U.S. National Counterterrorism Center

Lieutenant General Michael K. Nagata (R) served as the Former Director of Strategic Operational Planning for the U.S. National Counterterrorism Center. He is a distinguished senior fellow on national security with the Middle East Institute Counterterrorism Center.

Lieutenant General Nagata initially served as a Platoon Leader in the 2d Infantry Division before volunteering for Army Special Forces in 1984. Throughout his career, he served in various positions within Army Special Forces to include Detachment Commander, Executive Officer, Battalion S-3, Operations Center Director, BN Executive Officer, and Group Operations Officer. Later, he served as the Commander of 1st BN, 1st Special Warfare Training Group, responsible for the Special Forces Qualification Course. In 1990, he volunteered and assessed for a Special Missions Unit (SMU), in which he served at various times throughout his career as a Troop Commander, Operations Officer, Squadron Commander, and SMU Commander. After graduating from the National War College, Lieutenant General Nagata served in the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence and within the Intelligence Community as a Deputy Director for Counter Terrorism. As a general officer, he has served as the Deputy Chief, Office of the Defense Representative to Pakistan (ODRP), the Deputy Director for Special Operations and Counter Terrorism (J-37) of the Joint Staff, and Commander, SOCCENT.



# Plenary Speakers

**DAY 1****OPENING REMARKS****DR. ERIC EISENBERG**

Dean, College of Arts & Sciences,  
University of South Florida

Eric M. Eisenberg is professor of communication and since 2007 has served as dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of South Florida. Eisenberg graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Rutgers University in 1977 and received his doctorate in organizational communication from Michigan State University in 1982. Eisenberg twice received the National Communication Association award for the outstanding research publication in organizational communication, as well as the Burlington Foundation award for excellence in teaching. Eisenberg is the author of more than 70 articles, chapters, and books on the subjects of organizational communication, health communication, and communication theory. As Dean of the largest college at USF—with nearly 600 faculty, 18,000 students and a budget of nearly \$100 million—Eisenberg has sharpened the focus of faculty work through the creation of three interdisciplinary schools, 22 departments, and 10 interdisciplinary research centers. Even in the most difficult of economic times, he has been successful in recruiting world-class faculty talent. In addition, he has played a major role in the university's strategic efforts to measurably improve student success through transformed pedagogy. Working closely with faculty, staff, and academic advisors, he has successfully applied a combination of policy and process changes, course redesign and intrusive advising to significantly impact rates of progression, graduation, and employment.

**OPENING REMARKS****LTG (R) TERRY WOLFF**

Director, Near East South Asia (NESA)  
Center for Strategic Studies

LTG (ret) Terry Wolff became the Deputy Special Presidential Envoy for the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL in November 2015, after taking a leave of absence from the Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies (NESA).

LTG (ret) Wolff previously served as the Director of Strategic Plans and Policy, J-5 for the Joint Staff from September 2011 until December 2013. He retired in February 2014 after completing over 34 years of service.

LTG (ret) Wolff commanded at every level from platoon to armored division. He spent nearly ten years in Germany and served three tours in Iraq (2003; 2006-07; 2010) commanding the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment, the Coalition Military Assistance Training Team, and the United States Division-Center.

He has extensive experience in Washington, DC working military strategy and policy matters as well as interagency affairs: first on the Joint Staff as a Colonel; then nearly two years on the National Security Council as a Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Iraq and Afghanistan; over two years as the Joint Staff J-5; and now as the Deputy Presidential Envoy.

Commissioned from the Military Academy in 1979 with a BS in Engineering, he has Masters Degrees in International Affairs from Catholic University, the School of Advanced Military Studies at Fort Leavenworth and the Naval War College.

## Plenary Speakers

### OPENING REMARKS

#### MR. TODD VEAZIE



Director, Strategic Multilayer Assessment (SMA), Pentagon Joint Staff/J39

Mr. Todd Veazie serves as Director of the Strategic Multilayer Assessment (SMA) Office at the Joint Staff's Operations Directorate. SMA supports military leaders by assessing complex operational environments and technical challenges that require collaborative multi-agency, multidisciplinary, mixed-method approaches to expand strategic horizons and create effective strategy. Prior to reentering public service, Captain (R) Veazie was Chief Operating Officer at Kiernan Group Holdings, Inc, a global consulting firm specializing in law enforcement, risk services, defense, intelligence, and critical infrastructure resiliency. He served in the U.S. Navy, transitioned to the federal executive service, and was assigned to the National Counterterrorism Center. As a SEAL officer, he served in the east and west coast SEAL Teams and deployed to over fifty countries around the globe.

#### MR. ROBERT C. JONES



Robert Jones is a retired U.S. Army Special Forces Colonel; a former Deputy District Attorney; and the senior strategist at U.S. Special Operations Command. Currently serving as a member of the SOCOM J5 Donovan Strategic Initiatives Group, Mr. Jones is responsible for leading innovative thinking on the strategic environment and how it impacts factors critical to national security; such as the evolving character of conflict, deterrence in competition and societal stability. He also serves as the Strategic Advisor to the Director of Plans, Policy and Strategy. Mr. Jones is a featured lecturer for the JSOU Enlisted Academy on strategy, the evolving character of conflict, impact on viability of solutions, and implications for SOF. The Air War College also brings in Mr. Jones to address each class during their operational design phase to discuss the art of creative thinking in the context of design. He is currently promoting concepts and courses of action rooted in the principles of insurgency and unconventional warfare intended to revolutionize SOF operationalization of the National Defense and National Military Strategies. His focus is the pursuit of understanding, and the provision of context. If the world will not conform to what we wish it to be, then we must understand and engage the world as it actually is.

### OPENING REMARKS

#### DR. RIK LEGAULT



Dr. Legault was a DHS Post-Doctoral Research Fellow while at START. He received his Ph.D. from the School of Criminal Justice at the State University of New York at Albany in 2006 where he was also an Assistant Editor at the Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics. Dr. Legault performs research in quantitative analysis of survey data, policy evaluation, data usage and measurement, and violence reduction strategies.

*“If war is the final argument of Kings, then revolution is the final vote of the people.”*

**RCJ**

# Panel 1 Competition for Influence in the Middle East

## DAY 1

### MODERATOR



### DR. RICHARD L. RUSSELL

Richard L. Russell is Professor of National Security Affairs at NESAs. He also is Non-Resident Senior Fellow for Strategic Studies at the Center for the National Interest and Lecturer, Bush School of Government and Public Service, Texas A&M University.

Russell's career blends scholarship with national security practice. He previously held research appointments with the Miller Center of Public Affairs at the University of Virginia and the Institute for the Study of Diplomacy at Georgetown University. Russell taught for nearly ten years graduate courses on international security, grand strategy, and military operations for Georgetown University's Security Studies Program and served for seventeen years as a political-military analyst for the Central Intelligence Agency. His research, analysis, and teaching focuses on international relations, American foreign and defense policy, strategic studies, intelligence, weapons of mass destruction, and security in the Middle East, Europe, and Asia. He is the author of three books, more than forty journal and magazine articles and sixteen chapters in edited books.

### LTG (R) KAREN GIBSON



### Deputy Director of National Intelligence for National Security Partnerships

Lieutenant General Karen H. Gibson entered the Army in 1986 as a Distinguished Military Graduate of Purdue University's ROTC program, commissioning into the Military Intelligence Corps. She currently serves as the Deputy Director of National Intelligence for National Security Partnerships at the Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

LTG Gibson has served in a variety of joint and operational intelligence duty assignments in the United States, Middle East, Afghanistan, Africa, and Korea and has commanded at the company, battalion, and brigade levels. She most recently served as Director, J2, U.S. Central Command; Director, CJ2, Combined Joint Task Force-OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE; Deputy Commanding General for U.S. Army Cyber Command's Joint Force Headquarters; and Director, CJ2, Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa. Her awards include the Defense Superior Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters, Legion of Merit with one oak leaf cluster, Bronze Star Medal, and various other medals. She is authorized to wear the Parachutist, Air Assault, Joint Chiefs of Staff Identification and Army Staff badges.

### DR. MOHSEN MILANI



Founding Executive Director of the Center for Strategic & Diplomatic Studies and professor of politics at the University of South Florida, served as Chair of the Department of Government and International Affairs at USF for thirteen years.

During his tenure as Chair, the department began a new Ph.D. program in Governance. Milani was a research fellow at Harvard University, Oxford University, and the Foscari University in Venice, Italy. Since 2000, he has been invited to 200 conferences in 27 countries. Both private and governmental entities solicit his advice.

## Panel 1 Competition for Influence in the Middle East

**DAY 1**

### DR. NIKOLAY KOZHANOV



Richard L. Russell is Professor of National Security Affairs at NESAs. He also is Non-Resident Senior Fellow for Strategic Studies at the Center for the National Interest and Lecturer, Bush School of Government and Public Service, Texas A&M University.

Russell's career blends scholarship with national security practice. He previously held research appointments with the Miller Center of Public Affairs at the University of Virginia and the Institute for the Study of Diplomacy at Georgetown University. Russell taught for nearly ten years graduate courses on international security, grand strategy, and military operations for Georgetown University's Security Studies Program and served for seventeen years as a political-military analyst for the Central Intelligence Agency. His research, analysis, and teaching focuses on international relations, American foreign and defense policy, strategic studies, intelligence, weapons of mass destruction, and security in the Middle East, Europe, and Asia. He is the author of three books, more than forty journal and magazine articles and sixteen chapters in edited books.

### DR. MAORONG JIANG



Dr. Maorong Jiang is an Associate Professor of Political Science and International Relations and Director of the Asian World Center at Creighton University. Previously, he was military officer and faculty member at the Military College of International Relations. He served as a university administrator and government official in Beijing. Most recently, he was selected by the Japan government to participate in its building a Multi-layered Network of Influential Figures Program. Currently, he serves as a member of the U.S. Strategic Command Deterrence and Assurance Academic Alliance, member of International Board of Advisory for the India-based Anuvrat Global Organization, member and treasurer of the Governing Council of the Hawaii-based Center for Global Nonkilling, board member of the Omaha Sister Cities Association, and board member of the Nebraska State Council for the Social Studies.

## Panel 2 Population Dynamics: Unrest & Violent Extremism

### MODERATOR



### LEANNE ERDBERG STEADMAN

Leanne Erdberg Steadman is the director of Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) at the U.S. Institute of Peace where she directs USIP's CVE program and interim director of RESOLVE. Her work impacts CVE research, practice, and policy. Previously, Ms. Steadman held several positions in the U.S. government, including senior advisor to the deputy assistant to the president and deputy homeland security advisor on the National Security Council staff at the White House, counterterrorism advisor for the undersecretary of state for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights, director of African Affairs for the National Security Council staff, regional counterterrorism advisor in the State Department's Bureau of Counterterrorism where she covered issues related to Africa and the Arabian Peninsula and Iraq, and as a special assistant at the Department of Homeland Security Citizenship and Immigration Services.

### DR. JENNIFER JEFFERIS



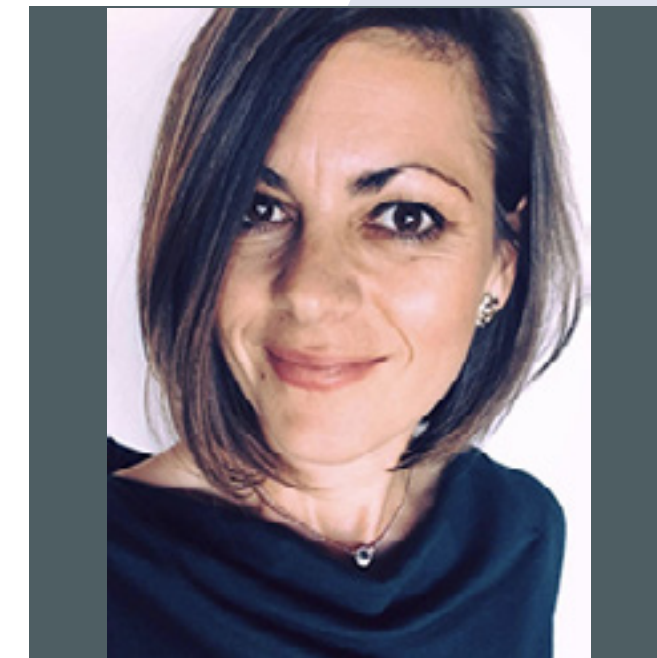
Dr. Jennifer Jefferis is a Teaching Professor at Georgetown and Director of Curriculum at the Security Studies Program in the School of Foreign Service. Her research focuses on religion and political violence. She has authored *Hamas: Terrorism, Governance, and its Future in the Region*; *Religion and Political Violence: Sacred Protest in the Modern World*; and *Armed for Life: Anti-Abortion Politics in the United States* as well as several articles on religion and violence. As a professor at NESAs, Dr. Jefferis developed security-related programs for government and civilian leaders in Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, the Palestinian Territories, and Israel. She was associate professor of Security Studies at the National Defense College of the United Arab Emirates, served as the Associate Dean of Academics at the College of International Security Affairs in Washington D.C., and a term member at the Council on Foreign Relations.

### DR. HASSAN ABBAS



Dr. Abbas is Professor of International Security Studies and Chair of the Department of Regional and Analytical Studies at National Defense University's College of International Security Affairs. He served as a Carnegie Fellow 2016-2017 at New America, where he is focused on a book project on Islam's internal struggles and spirituality narrated through the lens of his travels to Islam's holy sites across the world. He serves as a Senior Advisor at Asia Society and was a Senior Advisor at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University and the Distinguished Quaid-i-Azam Chair Professor at Columbia University before joining CISA. He regularly appears as an analyst on media, including CNN, ABC, BBC, C-Span, Al Jazeera, and GEO TV (Pakistan) and is well published on violence and extremism.

### DR. ALEXSANDRA NESIC



Dr. Aleksandra (Aleks) Nestic serves as a visiting Senior Social Scientist and Teaching Faculty at the US Army's J.F.K. Special Warfare Center and School, where she develops and teaches new courses in the advanced interdisciplinary science of the human domain. She is also a Visiting Faculty in the Countering Violent Extremism and Combatting Transregional Terrorism Fellowship Programs at the Joint Special Operations University (USSOCOM), Tampa, FL., a Senior Lecturer at the Foreign Service Institute at the U.S. Department of State, and a founding partner and Senior Researcher at Valka-Mir Human Security, LLC, currently working with a Hollywood production company on an Artificial Intelligence/Virtual Reality project to advance the development of conflict scenarios for pre-deployment training of US and UK SOF. Dr. Nestic's ongoing research examines the formation and spread of violent extremist ideologies employed by various state and non-state actors, influence operations, recruitment strategies, as well as the development of psychological resilience mechanisms for individuals and communities vulnerable to extremist recruitment. Her most recent field research has been in eastern European communities facing Russian hybrid warfare, and in refugee camps in Cypress, Greece and Jordan where she trained police, security forces and social workers on psychosocial dimensions of war trauma and violence prevention.

## Panel 2 Population Dynamics: Unrest & Violent Extremism

**DAY 1**

### DR. GAWDAT BAHGAT



Dr. Gawdat Bahgat is professor of National Security Affairs at the National Defense University's Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Study. He is an Egyptian-born specialist in Middle Eastern policy, particularly Egypt, Iran, and the Gulf region. His areas of expertise include energy security, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, counter-terrorism, Arab-Israeli conflict, North Africa, and American foreign policy in the Middle East.

Bahgat's career blends scholarship with national security practicing. Before joining NESA in December 2009, he taught at different universities. Bahgat published twelve books including *Security and Bilateral Issues between Iran and Its Arab Neighbors* (2016), *Energy Security in the Gulf* (2015), *Alternative Energy in the Middle East* (2013), *Energy Security* (2011), *International Political Economy* (2010), *Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in the Middle East* (2007), *Israel and the Persian Gulf* (2006), and *American Oil Diplomacy* (2003). Bahgat's articles have appeared in *International Affairs*, *Middle East Journal*, *Middle East Policy*, *Oil and Gas Journal*, and *OPEC Review*, among others. His work has been translated to several foreign languages.

GPC CONFERENCE EMCEE: DR. GARRETT POTTS, USF

### OPENING REMARKS

8:55 - 9:00	<b>WELCOME!</b> Livestream Countdown
9:00 - 9:20	<b>PLENARY SPEAKER: LTG (R) KAREN GIBSON</b> DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE FOR NATIONAL SECURITY PARTNERSHIPS “HOW AMERICA ADVANCES IN THE GREAT POWER COMPETITION”
9:20 - 9:30	<b>Q&amp;A</b>
9:30 - 10:15	<b>KEYNOTE SPEAKER: MAJOR GENERAL ALEXUS GRYNKEWICH</b> DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS, U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND “DEFINING THE U.S. ROLE IN THE GREAT POWER COMPETITION”
10:15 - 10:30	<b>KEYNOTE Q &amp; A</b>
10:30 - 10:45	<b>BREAK</b>
10:45 - 12:00	<b>PANEL PRESENTATION</b>

### PANEL 3: COMPETITION FOR INFLUENCE: INFORMATION ENVIRONMENT

This panel will define and discuss Great Power Competition, relating to national security objectives, information dynamics, strategic decision-making, and operations in the Information Environment.

### PANEL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How will information about the COVID-19 crisis be leveraged to influence the CASA Region?
2. How will information be used through transient populations to influence regional governments in the CASA Region?
3. How will technological innovation factor into influence through the information environment?
4. How might information be used to create divides within populations and governments that may disadvantage the U.S. and U.S. allies in the CASA Region?

**MODERATOR: DR. SEAN RYAN** (WEST LIBERTY UNIVERSITY)

### PANELISTS

**DR. GREGORY SEESE** (JOHNS HOPKINS)

**DR. LES GRAU** (USA FOREIGN MILITARY STUDIES OFFICE)

**DR. ANDREA DEW** (USNWC)

**MS. LEILA GOLESTANI** (FORMER IRAN ADVISOR, USSOCOM COMMANDER)

12:00 - 12:30 **PANEL Q & A**

12:30 - 1:15 **LUNCH**

1:15 - 2:30 **PANEL PRESENTATION**

### PANEL 4: THE COVID-19 GRAY RHINO: PREDICTABILITY, IMPACT, AND IMPLICATIONS FOR CENTCOM

This panel will explore the nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on global populations and their regimes, ramifications for global power competition, practical detection, and implications for the military.

### PANEL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What were the key interactions between COVID-19 and other variables of the system you study, and what was the nature of those interactions?
2. Were there any effects of the pandemic on your domain of expertise that have surprised you?
3. How could the actors in your domain have been better prepared to respond to the pandemic? What leadership and support is required for an effective response?

**MODERATOR: DR. LARRY KUZNAR** (NSI)

“It’s a Gray Rhino! the nature of pandemics & how they are understood, what predictability means, the means for detection”

### PANELISTS

**DR. YANEER BAR YAM** (NECSI)

**DR. HARORO J. INGRAM** (GWU)

**LT. COL CHRISTOPHER FORREST** (NSC)

# Agenda September 17

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DAY 2

2:30 - 3:00

PANEL Q & A

## CLOSING REMARKS

3:00 - 3:30

**DR. PAUL SANBERG** SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH, INNOVATION, & KNOWLEDGE ENTERPRISE & PRESIDENT OF THE USF RESEARCH FOUNDATION,  
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA



## Keynote Speaker

**MAJOR GENERAL ALEXUS GRYNKEWICH**



Director of Operations, U.S. Central Command

Maj. Gen. Alexis G. Grynkewich is the Director of Operations, U.S. Central Command. In this role, he is responsible for developing contingency plans and assisting the commander with overseeing joint operations across a 20-nation area of responsibility covering Central and Southwest Asia.

## Plenary Speaker

**LTG (R) KAREN GIBSON**



Deputy Director of National Intelligence for National Security Partnerships

Lieutenant General Karen H. Gibson entered the Army in 1986 as a Distinguished Military Graduate of Purdue University's ROTC program, commissioning into the Military Intelligence Corps. She currently serves as the Deputy Director of National Intelligence for National Security Partnerships at the Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

**DAY 2**

## Panel 3 Competition for Influence: Information Environment

**DAY 2****MODERATOR****DR. SEAN RYAN**

Dr. Ryan is an assistant professor at West Liberty University, teaches courses in public and non-profit management and the capstone strategy. After graduating from West Point with a bachelor's in engineering, Dr. Ryan spent 30 years in the military. He retired in 2012 as Colonel, with a successful career characterized by progressively challenging assignments in Asia, the Middle East, Southwest Asia, Europe, and the Americas. He received his Ph.D. in Management (2017) from Walden University.

**DR. GREGORY SEESE**

Gregory Seese, Psy.D, is a senior scientist at the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory and Commander of the 11th Psychological Operations (PSYOP) Battalion. He has more than 25 years of combined active and reserve military experience with expertise in the planning and operational conduct of PSYOP, Information Operations, Military Deception, and Civil Affairs activities. He has provided direct support to both Conventional and Special Operations Forces, worked in Department of State, Joint, Interagency, and multi-national environments with deployments to Bosnia-Herzegovina, Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Persian Gulf. Dr. Seese most recently served as the senior PSYOP Unconventional Warfare exercise planner for the United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC), and prior to that was the PSYOP Division Chief in the USASOC G39. Previous positions include Chief of Behavioral Sciences at the Tribal Engagement Coordination Cell in the Office of Security Cooperation at the US Embassy in Iraq, Director of Plans at the Joint Information Support Task Force in Qatar, and a variety of assignments in the 6th Psychological Operations Battalion, and the 1st Special Warfare Training Group. Dr. Seese's current efforts include developing and implementing innovative solutions for the Department of Defense, Department of State, and Interagency to leverage Artificial Intelligence / Machine Learning to detect and counter malign influence efforts at machine speed.

**DR. LES GRAU**

Dr. Lester W. Grau is a Senior Analyst for the Foreign Military Studies Office (FMSO) at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. He has served the U.S. Army for 52 years, retiring as an infantry Lieutenant Colonel and continuing service through research and teaching in Army professional military education. His on-the-ground service over those decades spanned from the Vietnam War to Cold War assignments in Europe, Vietnam, Korea, and the Soviet Union to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. As one of the U.S. Army's leading Russian military experts, he has conducted various assignments in Russia including collaborative research with the Russian General Staff's Military History Institute and with other Russian military officials. He has also conducted collaborative research in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and with numerous organizations in Europe.

## Panel 3 Competition for Influence: Information Environment

DAY 2

### DR. ANDREA DEW



Professor Andrea J. Dew is an Associate Professor of Strategy and Policy and also holds the Chair of Maritime Irregular Warfare Forces. She lived in Japan for eight years where she studied advanced Japanese at the Kyoto Japanese Language School. Professor Dew has served as a Research Fellow at the Belfer Center for Science in International Affairs at Harvard University, and Senior Counter-Terrorism Fellow at the Jebson Center for Counter Terrorism Studies at the Fletcher School. Dr. Dew is the founding Co-Director of the Center on Irregular Warfare and Armed Groups at the US Naval War College.

### MS. LEILA GOLESTANI



Ms. Golestani has a significant experience as a former Iran Advisor to the USSOCOM Commander.

## Panel 4 The Covid-19 Gray Rhino: Predictability, Impact, and Implications for the Military

DAY 2

### MODERATOR



### DR. LARRY KUZNAR

Dr. Kuznar specializes in the ecological and economic features of traditional pastoral societies. He has performed extensive research among Aymara herders in southern Peru and is currently working with Navajo sheepherders and cattle ranchers. He has published articles in anthropological journals such as *American Anthropologist*, *Current Anthropology*, *Human Ecology*, *Journal of Quantitative Anthropology*, *Nomadic Peoples*, *Mountain Research and Development*, *Chungara*, *Dialogo Andino*, *Journal of World Systems Research*, and *Proceedings of the Indiana Academy of Social Sciences*. In addition to his ethnographic research, Dr. Kuznar has conducted ethnoarchaeological studies among pastoralists and published a book on his research entitled *Awatimarka: The Ethnoarchaeology of an Andean Community*.

### DR. YANEER BAR YAM



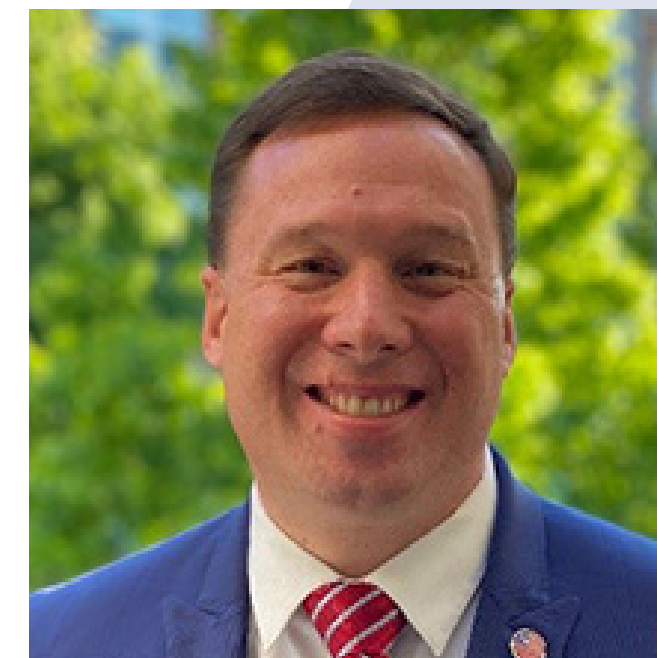
Professor Yaneer Bar-Yam holds an SB and Ph.D. in physics from MIT. Since the late 1980s he has contributed to founding the field of complex systems science, introducing fundamental mathematical rigor, real world application, and educational programs for new concepts and insights of this field. His recent work quantitatively analyzes the origins and impacts of market crashes, social unrest, ethnic violence, military conflict and pandemics, the structure and dynamics of social networks, as well as the bases of creativity, panic, evolution and altruism. He has advised the U.S. Government on global social unrest and the crises in Egypt and Syria, counterterrorism strategies, military force transformation, market regulation, delivery of disease prevention services and control of hospital infections. He regularly advises NGOs and corporations regarding their use of complex systems science. He has authored more than 200 journal articles. His work on the causes of the global food crisis was cited among the top 10 scientific discoveries of 2011 by *Wired* magazine. International coverage of his work includes *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, *The Guardian*, *The Sunday Times*, *Die Zeit*, and *Le Monde*, among others.

### DR. HARORO J. INGRAM



Dr. Haroro J. Ingram is a senior research fellow with George Washington University's Program on Extremism. His research primarily focuses on the role of propaganda and charismatic leadership in the evolution and appeal of violent non-state political movements; militant Islamist propaganda targeting English-speaking audiences; and the role of strategic communications in national security operations, strategy and policy, particularly in the areas of counterterrorism and countering violent extremism. Ingram's work draws heavily on primary source materials, most of which is collected during field research in countries across the Middle East, South and Southeast Asia. He currently runs several in-country applied research projects in these regions mostly focused on enhancing civil society CVE capabilities. Ingram's research has been published in *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, *Australian Journal of Political Science*, *RUSI Journal*, *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, *War on the Rocks*, *The Atlantic*, *The National Interest* and *The Washington Post* amongst others.

### LT. COL CHRISTOPHER FORREST



Lieutenant Colonel Christopher D. Forrest, Indo-Pacific Division Chief, Headquarters Air Force CHECKMATE, Pentagon, leads a team of air-power strategists to provide the Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Chief of Staff of the Air Force best military advice on current and near-term operations and strategy. His portfolio entails assessment, operational planning support, lethal and non-lethal effect integration, clean-sheet strategy and concept development for the China and North Korea problem sets. His recent work involves a deep-dive project on Great Power competition and competitive strategy. Prior to his assignment at CHECKMATE, Lt Col Forrest served as the Chief of Strategy and Plans and Chief of Targeting at the 613th Air Operations Center, HQ Pacific Air Forces, Joint Base Pearl Harbor Hickam, Hawaii. In his role as Chief of Strategy and Plans, Lt Col Forrest conducted operational planning, Concept of Operations development, and strategy for the Commander, Pacific Air Forces and Theater Joint Force Air Component Commander to CDRUSINDOPACOM. In his role as Chief of Targeting, Lt Col Forrest was responsible for targeting strategy, cyber/non-lethal effects integration, and operational-level planning for INDOPACOM operational and contingency plans.

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