CONFERENCE AGENDA

SUNDAY, 19 APRIL 2015

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS: LTG Robert L. Caslen, Jr.
Superintendent, U.S. Military Academy at West Point

OPENING KEYNOTE: GEN(R) JOHN ABIZAID
Emeritus Distinguished Chair, Combating Terrorism Center
Topic: The State of Global Counterterrorism Today

MONDAY, 20 APRIL 2015

SESSION 1: DETERMINING STRATEGIC ENDS IN COMPLEX AND UNCERTAIN ENVIRONMENTS
This session will be foundational and focus on determining strategic ends in complex and uncertain environments. Before embarking on a critical conversation about U.S. strategic counterterrorism ends, leaders from other fields who face problems of equal (if not greater) size and scope will – from their outside vantage point – offer their appraisal of our problem, as well as share their thoughts about how approaches or strategies pursued in their field might benefit our own. Specific emphasis will be placed on exploring the terms we use to characterize our strategy (i.e. will we ever really defeat al-Qa’ida, its affiliates and adherents?) and on identifying not only what has worked and not worked in terms of our approach, but also what strategy is achievable and sustainable moving forward.

Featured Speakers
Michèle Flournoy, CEO – Center for New American Security
Dr. Yaneer Bar-Yam, Founding President – NECSI

Moderator
Dr. Stephen Biddle, Professor – George Washington University

Expert Roundtable
LTG Tony Thomas, Commander – Joint Special Operations Command
LTC Bryan C. Price, Director – Combating Terrorism Center

SESSION 2: METRICS AND DATA
This session will build upon session one and focus on exploring how we can better metric our performance in the counterterrorism space, and how – in specific and concrete terms – we should be evaluating our success or lack thereof. As any student of data science knows, the perception one has of their performance is intimately tied to the metrics they have selected to evaluate their actions and impact. The United States has certainly made some progress since 9/11 in degrading the capabilities of al-Qa’ida and other militant actors who intend to do harm to the United States and our allies. However, the geographic dispersion and decentralization of the terrorist threat – and the emergence of entities like the Islamic State – illustrate that our approach has not been sufficient, and that there remains a lot to be
done. To that end, this panel will examine what certain non-counterterrorism fields can teach strategists about crafting metrics that are useful for gauging effectiveness. The panel will then take a critical look at both the data that can be leveraged and the metrics we can establish – or refine – that might help us to gain efficiencies and be more effective in our counterterrorism pursuits over the long term.

**Featured Speaker**

Brian Macdonald, Director of Analytics – Florida Panthers (NHL Hockey)

**Moderator**

LTC Michael Yankovich, Academy Professor – Math Department, USMA

**Expert Roundtable**

Vinnie Viola, Founder – Virtu Financial
Javed Ali, Director, Office of National Intelligence Management – NCTC
Dennis Gleeson, former Director of Strategy (DI) – CIA

**LUNCH KEYNOTE: AMB MICHAEL SHEEHAN**

Distinguished Chair, Combating Terrorism Center

*Topic: Unconventional Approaches and our Layered CT Strategy*

**SESSION 3: MEDIA AND THE WAR OF IDEAS**

This session will explore media, marketing, and strategic communications as it relates to terrorism and counterterrorism – a non-kinetic area that could be characterized as the “War of Ideas.” This is an arena that the United States and its allies have consistently struggled with since 9/11. Not only is the U.S. being outcompeted in this space, but one could also (perhaps provocatively) make the case that it has also ceded this battle-space, an issue which is reflected in the paucity of resources and analytical and operational attention given to this area. The trends we are witnessing in terms of how violent extremist organizations and the individuals associated with or inspired by them are communicating – particularly the speed, dynamism, diversity (of platforms), and volume of their communications – pose additional challenges and will likely only continue to compound our lackluster performance in this area. To that end, attention in this panel will be placed on hearing from voices from other fields – particularly what we can learn from news and marketing / advertising specialists about how they diagnose the environment we are operating in and what advice they might have about how one could more effectively respond. Emphasis will be placed on identifying why groups like the Islamic State have been so successful in the social media sphere and what we can learn from them, as well as discussing what has or has not worked with respect to our approach in the “War of Ideas” area.

**Featured Speakers**

Pete Favat, Chief Creative Officer – Deutsch
Usman Raja, Director – Unity Initiative

**Moderator**

Paul Cruickshank, Terrorism Analyst – CNN

**Expert Roundtable**

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SESSION 4: PARTNERSHIPS & BUILDING PARTNER CAPACITY
Given the geographic scope of the terrorism problem and the United States’ inability to fully defeat the threat of transnational terrorism and deny malign actors safe-haven by itself, partnerships are an essential part of our long-term counterterrorism approach. To that end, this session will focus on relationships and alliances – specifically how we should think about building partner capacity in counterterrorism (i.e. what type of relations are needed to facilitate effective counterterrorism); how those partnerships (and the trade-offs often associated with them) are best managed and what pitfalls we can avoid in building them; and what success looks like in this domain. Are there specific cases we should look at and metrics that can help us to better evaluate our progress / lack of progress? To broaden our view, the diverse mix of panelists will be asked to share their thoughts about how public-private sector partnerships have been used in their field(s) to help solve or at least better manage intractable, complex problems. This panel will also be asked to evaluate the best way to balance the operational with the political aspects of counterterrorism.

Featured Speakers
CSM Faiz Wafa, Afghan National Army Special Operations Command
Sophie Delaunay, Executive Director – Doctors without Borders (US)

Moderator
Dr. Alexander Evans, Coordinator – UN Al-Qa’ida Sanctions Committee

Expert Roundtable
LTG Robert L. Caslen, Jr., Superintendent – West Point
MG Wayne W. Grigsby, Jr., Commander – CJTF-Horn of Africa

SESSION 5: ISLAMIC STATE POLICY SESSION
This session will function as a practical capstone exercise for the conference, whereby the panelists and audience members will be provided with a venue to share their ideas and apply what they have learned to a significant counterterrorism problem: the self-declared Islamic State. Through a discussion facilitated by a moderator, panelists and other attendees will be encouraged to provide both ‘outside of the box’ and practical ideas about strategy, metrics and data, partnerships, and the war of ideas – the four substantive panels of Senior Conference – as it relates to the so-called Islamic State. The goal of this session will be to refine our thinking about this group and how its growth, actions, and influence can be better managed, limited, or countered.
Moderator
Juan Zarate, Senior Advisor – Transnational Threats Project at CSIS

Expert Roundtable
RDML Robert Sharp, J2 – U.S. Special Operations Command
Nada Bakos, former CIA Analyst
Brian Fishman, Counterterrorism Fellow – New America Foundation