

Select Upcoming Events

PONI BREAKFAST WITH KIRK DONALD

Thursday, June 26, 2014

9:00 a.m.–10:30 a.m.

CSIS, 1616 Rhode Island Ave., NW

A DISCUSSION OF THE 2014 QUADRENNIAL HOMELAND SECURITY REVIEW

Friday, June 27, 2014

9:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m.

CSIS, 1616 Rhode Island Ave., NW

AN ASSESSMENT OF RUSSIAN DEFENSE CAPABILITIES AND SECURITY STRATEGY

Monday, June 30, 2014

9:00 a.m.–10:30 a.m.

CSIS, 1616 Rhode Island Ave., NW

Select Recent Events

THE STATE OF PEACE: MEASURING COUNTRY RISK AND OPPORTUNITY

Featured a panel discussion on the 2014 Global Peace Index and recent trends in militarization and conflict.

DHS SPENDING AND THE SUPPORTING INDUSTRIAL BASE

This report rollout featured CSIS expert analysis on the impact of sequestration on DHS contracting and the associated homeland security industrial base.

THE SYRIAN CONFLICT'S FOREIGN FIGHTERS: CONCERNS AT HOME AND ABROAD

Featured two panel discussions on the potential fallout from the ongoing civil war.

CITIZEN-SOLDIERS IN A TIME OF TRANSITION: THE FUTURE OF THE U.S. ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

Featured a keynote address by Representative Tim Walz (D-MN) and a panel discussion on the key findings from a recent CSIS report.

THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN: STRATEGIC GEOGRAPHY AGAIN

SAM BRANNEN

@csis_sam



The Eastern Mediterranean was once a strategic geography discussed in reverent tones in Washington. It was NATO's southern flank: a gateway to chokepoints and supply routes, in the crosshairs of the Soviet Union, and ignored at the peril of global stability. The Eastern Mediterranean demanded deep subject matter expertise, drove Pentagon planning, and invited big geopolitical strategy from the Truman Doctrine through the Camp David Accords.

After the Cold War's end, the United States largely managed crises as they appeared and fostered stability in the region despite waves of instability on its periphery. This was a successful overall strategy for the region for several decades.

But in recent years, shifting domestic politics, internal violent conflict, and uncooperative governments across the region have challenged an ad hoc and disaggregated approach to advancing U.S. interests in the Eastern Mediterranean. Traditional regional allies such as Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Israel are asserting themselves in ways that are increasingly at odds with U.S. policy. NATO has failed to reengage the region. And Russia, China, and Iran are increasingly asserting themselves, exposing the region again to the return dangers of international competition with consequence for transatlantic and global security.

Former Supreme Allied Commander Europe Admiral Jim Stavridis and others have rightly observed that the United States needs a new strategic approach for the Eastern Mediterranean. But before such a strategy can be created, the United States simply needs an updated understanding of the changes underway across the region. Washington needs to understand how Eastern Mediterranean capitals view their own regional dynamics, and what it is they would want from U.S. influence, let alone how they might be willing to cooperate to reinvigorate a regional security approach. In the year ahead, working across its functional and regional programs, CSIS plans to engage in this deep analysis and understanding of a region that has returned to strategic prominence and peril. ■

TIME FOR A NEW G7?

DAVID MILLER

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Following Russia's annexation of Crimea, the G8 suspended Russia's membership and cancelled the planned Sochi summit. Soon thereafter, Russia signed a \$400 billion natural gas deal with China and began looking to price trade in renminbi. While the oil deal had been in

the works for years, the timing underscores the G7's waning influence and calls into question its static membership in a dynamic world.

For starters, the G7 no longer encompasses the seven largest economic powers—China, the second-largest economy in real GDP, being the most obvious omission. Proponents counter that the G7 countries still make up nearly half of the world's total output. Yet IMF data show that the G7's proportion of the global economy has steadily slipped since the mid-1980s. Moreover, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), G7 defense expenditures as a proportion of global military spending has declined steadily since SIPRI began collecting data in 1988 and now stands at only 53 percent. And removing the United States from consideration paints a vastly different picture, as it accounts for a whopping 70 percent of the G7's military spending. The next highest spending G7 country (France), actually ranks only fifth globally in expenditures.

The G7's future is even more troubling. According to Standard Chartered Bank, the combined GDP of Brazil, Russia, India, and China will outpace that of the G7 by 2030. While these projections may prove rosy for emerging markets, the trajectory seems clear. Even if the United States maintains its economic and military lead, it will find itself in a much more competitive international arena. Rising powers such as China and India must be addressed and incorporated peacefully into security and economic regimes. Yet, if the United States prevents access to exclusive decisionmaking bodies such as the G7, it risks pushing them together into alternate, possibly more adversarial, regimes.

Perhaps the G7 is still a useful, if not ideal, international framework. Since it began as an ad hoc organization, one possible solution is adopting a flexible structure. Membership could rotate every four years based on real GDP, military/defense spending, or another metric. In any case, China deserves a seat at the table. Otherwise, policymakers must accept the limitations of the G7 construct if they hope to implement policies with a truly global impact. ■

RESOLVING THE “POSSIBLE MILITARY DIMENSIONS” OF IRAN’S NUCLEAR PROGRAM

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In November 2013, Iran and the P5+1 signed the Joint Plan of Action (JPA) on Iran's nuclear program, resulting in one of the most significant movements on the issue in decades. Intended to be an interim agreement, the JPA outlines mutual concessions over a six-month period while negotiators craft a comprehensive long-term agreement. As the July 20 deadline of the JPA nears, negotiators are working to resolve several outstanding concerns, including the scope of Iran's uranium enrichment program and redesigning the Arak reactor so that it produces less weapons-grade plutonium.

Multimedia



WATCH “Intelligence and National Security,” a CSIS Military Strategy Forum featuring the Honorable Michael Vickers, under secretary of defense for intelligence.



WATCH “U.S. Customs and Border Protection in the 21st Century,” featuring a discussion with the Honorable Gil Kerlikowske, commissioner, U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

LISTEN to Sam Brannen explain how the military should approach the manned/unmanned teaming concept to make greater use of what each of the services already owns, as part of the CSIS Ground Forces Dialogue series.

Beyond this, there are the lingering questions about the possible military dimensions (PMD) of Iran's nuclear program. The International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) investigation of these concerns in a separate but parallel track to the P5+1 negotiations has yielded a few results (e.g., explanations with respect to Iran's development of exploding bridgewire detonators, which can be used as components in an implosion-type nuclear device), but the more controversial questions about suspect activities at the Parchin military complex remain unresolved.

The resolution of Iran's PMD file will be an essential pillar of a verifiable and comprehensive agreement on Iran's nuclear program. Without clarification of PMD activities, the P5+1 would be unable to accurately quantify Iran's "breakout" time for producing a nuclear weapon, and the P5+1's confidence in the intentions of Iran would be diminished. The IAEA would also be limited in its ability to confirm the completeness and correctness of Iran's material declarations, which could undermine the broader nonproliferation regime.

Undoubtedly, resolving the PMD issues will be a difficult task. Absent a sufficient resolution of PMD concerns, Congress could limit key concessions to Iran by refusing to amend or repeal sanctions. However, Iran publicly renounced nuclear weapons through religious decree, and "coming clean" could place Iranian leaders in an uncomfortable spotlight. While complete transparency might be ideal for the P5+1, it would be difficult for Iranian leaders to accept. Ultimately, the resolution of the PMD file will be a contentious political debate, dependent on how badly both parties want to resolve the standoff that has lasted for more than a decade. ■

THE REAL PROBLEM WITH CHEATING AT MALMSTROM

SARAH WEINER

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On Wednesday of last week, Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James announced a set of new initiatives meant to reinvigorate lagging morale and address other personnel issues in the Air Force nuclear enterprise. These new programs come in response to the discovery in January 2014 that over 90 ICBM officers at Malmstrom Air Force Base, Montana, had admitted to cheating or being aware of cheating on their proficiency tests. The cheating scandal led to the temporary decertification of almost one-fifth of the United States' cadre of nuclear missileers and prompted Secretary James to acknowledge a "systemic problem" in the nuclear force.

Investigators are now looking into the underlying factors that would cause Air Force officers to cheat on a test that, by all indications, most would have been able to pass on their own. Many factors have been

Media Highlights

"The president's policy has all the marks of a solid doctrine for the use of force...Nevertheless, Mr. Obama failed to tie this strategic frame to the underlying funding and hard choices necessary to make it possible."

—Kathleen Hicks in a blog post for the *Wall Street Journal* on President Obama's foreign policy address at West Point.

"On the one hand, there is more willingness to cooperate on the part of Turkey...On the other hand, doing anything with the Turks is very, very hard."

—Sam Brannen to the *Washington Post* on the complicated regional geopolitics of conducting U.S. airstrikes in Iraq.

"By reducing troop levels to under 10,000 [in Afghanistan], it will certainly create more space for al Qaeda in the north..."

—Stephanie Sanok Kostro to the *Daily Beast* on the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan and the potential vulnerabilities for al Qaeda influences.

identified, including overreliance on test scores as a metric for evaluation and promotion, stress created by a “zero mistakes” professional culture, and insufficient incentives available to airmen who enter the nuclear career field. Secretary James’s new slate of reforms includes adding more money to the Air Force’s nuclear budget, proposing the elevation of the position of Global Strike commander from a three- to a four-star general, and introducing new bonuses and incentive pay for missileers.

These new steps are certainly headed in the right direction, but the source of the morale problem may run deeper. Nuclear weapons are an insurance policy we hope never to use. The Cold War Soviet threat gave context and immediacy to the day-to-day task of executing the nuclear mission, but today’s security and political climates are very different. In the wake of the cheating incident, it’s worth asking if the value and importance of the nuclear mission are being sufficiently communicated to the men and women who have dedicated their careers to the important work of deterrence. Without this sense of purpose, we can expect to see more incidents like the one at Malmstrom in the future. ■

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Recent Publications

READ *U.S. Department of Homeland Security Contract and Grant Spending and the Supporting Industrial Base, 2004–2013*, for an analysis of contracting for products, services, and research development by DHS and its key components.

READ *Citizen-Soldiers in a Time of Transition: The Future of the U.S. Army National Guard*, by Stephanie Sanok Kostro, for recommendations on potential future responsibilities for the Army National Guard.

READ “West Point 2014: What’s the ‘Theory of the Case?’” a Commentary by Nathan Freier on President Barack Obama’s recent foreign policy address at West Point.

READ “Sequestration and the Future of the Air Force Aircraft Industrial Base,” by Rhys McCormick, the latest analysis in the National Security Program on Industry and Resources’ Current Issues series.

CSIS Critical Questions

READ “Crisis in Iraq and Military Options: ‘By, With, and Through Who?’” by Nathan Freier.

READ “President Obama’s West Point Commencement Speech,” by Clark Murdock.

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