

The Americas Series

Conference Report

With a preface by **Dr. Sebastian Bruns**

Head of the Center for Maritime Strategy and Security (CMSS) at the
Institute for Security Policy at the Kiel University (ISPK)



Imprint

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The Americas Series

Conference Report

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Preface

by Dr. Sebastian Bruns –

Head of the Center for Maritime Strategy and Security (CMSS) at the Institute for Security Policy at the Kiel University (ISPK)



*Dr. Sebastian Bruns, Institute for Security Policy
Kiel University (ISPK)*

During the first quarter of 2021, the Center for Maritime Strategy & Security (CMSS) at the Institute for Security Policy University of Kiel (ISPK) conducted a series of five virtual seminars featuring two speakers each. In addition, we conducted a closed back-ground talk on U.S. naval shipbuilding programs.

The idea for the series was born out of the necessity to look beyond the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, a likely turning point in 21st century history due to its truly global nature. In the

The idea for the series was born out of the necessity to look beyond the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

post-pandemic world, defense budgets will be under significant pressure to cover some of the fallout of this health crisis. Yet, maritime security challenges continue to be a pressing issue in international politics. Ships, on the other hand, are really long-term investments, as they usually serve coast guards, navies or their respective operators for twenty-five years or more. Hence, a strategic mindset is absolutely imperative.

The second push for this seminar came from our conviction that shared knowledge yields empowerment. We sought to bring together specialists from North, Latin and South America – helped in no small part through the virtual medium – with

experts from Europe to discuss (a) maritime strategic and naval security issues in the Western hemisphere and (b) to outline their relevance for NATO and the EU.



The events were on the record, open and unclassified to allow the participation of a wide variety of individuals and institutions. Recordings of the presentations and the Q&A discussion time are available on our YouTube channel. Scan the QR-code or follow the link: <https://t1p.de/2i82>

The CMSS is continental Europe's only dedicated maritime strategy and security think tank. Our research interests include the role of seapower in international relations as well as global maritime security and strategy challenges. You are cordially invited to contact us to discuss issues of mutual concern or research ideas, or join future events and seminars!

Dr. Sebastian Bruns, Head of Center for Maritime Strategy & Security and Chair of the associated Kiel Seapower Series.

Petty Officer 2nd Class Taylor M DiMartino





The Americas Series

The Sessions

During five online sessions, ten different speakers presented ten pressing topics on maritime strategy and security in the Americas. **Session 1** kicked off on January 28th with two quasi-navies: Our distinguished speakers presented an overview of the U.S. Coast Guard, the 12th largest navy in the world if calculated by tonnage, and the sea-lift and merchant marine capabilities of the United States of America. **Session 2** brought together two items of interest: First, the discussion centered on the North, South, and Latin America as a naval market. Second, with the Mexican Navy, an often overlooked maritime force and its strategy was covered. **Session 3** covered the two

Click on the “play” symbol on the right side of the sessions to get to the presentation on YouTube.

North American countries with rich naval tradition and sizeable navies. Canada and the United States are both NATO navies and, as such, of utmost interest and relevance to transatlantic security. **Session 4** brought us further south in the Americas. Our panelists discussed maritime security challenges in Latin America and in particular the Colombian naval strategy. **Session 5**, our final session, paired a perspective on China's maritime influence in South America and IUU fishing with a perspective on Brazilian naval strategy and its naval challenges over the next years.

Session 1:

US Sealift and Merchant Marine & US Coast Guard

US Sealift and Merchant Marine



The first presentation focused on how American merchant marine and sealift supports US national defense strategy and what challenges are currently associated with it. Four different fleets are being used to perform the support for the US Navy, which are coordinated by the United Nation Transportation Command.

One of the things that makes the US military such a unique military, is its ability logistically support itself during overseas operations.

(1) The *fleet support* consists of 29 vessels directly supporting the US Navy and in its current form exists since 1949. Although the ships in the auxiliary fleet are some of the most advanced vessels in the world, one of the big issues that was identified recently is the need for more tankers to support the US Navy, especially for deployments far away from the supply bases.

(2) The *prepositioning fleet* are the vessels operating at this time and ready to deploy on short notice. It has been a validated concept since the early 1990s beginning with operations "Desert Shield" & "Desert Storm". However, the cost for ships that are under anchor for most of the time led to a reduction of prepositioning squadrons, while another problem is the advanced age of the vessels.

(3) The *surge sealift* consists of 61 vessels that are government-owned and part of the ready reserve force. One of the most pressing issues facing the surge sealift fleet is the average age of 41 years, which was part of the reason that the "Turbo Activation Plan" conducted in 2019 revealed that only 40%, rather than the required 85% of ships are operational on short notice.

(4) The *sustainment element* is drawn from the US commercial fleet. While the amount of cargo being transported in the world has

increased by 22 times since 1950, the US merchant marine has declined. The lack of the commercial infrastructure in the US has hurt not only the merchant marine but also the US Navy. *Rapporteur: Henrik Schilling*

US Coast Guard



The USCG is, quantitatively speaking, the 12th largest navy in the world.

The United States Coast Guard (USCG), founded in 1790, is a military service since 1915. In its current organizational form during peacetime, it is under the authority of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The USCG has law enforcement authority and a wide range of responsibilities. On the low-end of the spectrum of conflict and intensity, these include a host of regulatory tasks usually pertaining to maritime safety. Some of the more intense and recognizable tasks then include Search and Rescue (SAR) and maritime law-enforcement. On the high-end, the USCG participates in warfighting missions.

As of 2021, the Coast Guard encompasses some 87,000 men and women and operates, quantitatively speaking, the 12th largest navy in the world. However, this is somewhat of a misnomer given the Coast Guard's roles, missions, and authorities. In any case, 200 aircraft, 270 cutters (roughly comparable with patrol boats and corvettes) and 1,650

The service has budget & manpower challenges to cope with even as it is now undergoing major fleet recapitalization.

boats spot the USCG livery. The Coast Guard operates from American inland waterways to global theatres ranging from the Arctic to the Black Sea and further out to the South Atlantic, the Pacific and the Persian Gulf. International cooperation plays an important role for the service given that it only about the size of the New York City Police Department.

Drug smuggling interdiction and maritime migration interdiction will, for the foreseeable future, remain a cornerstone of the workload for "Coasties". Both maritime challenges are characterized by a significant degree of innovation and often criminal energy which the Coast Guard has to counter through innovations of its own. The U.S. Coast Guard and its role as an auxiliary navy certainly deserves a broader research interest in the international maritime and naval community.

Rapporteur: Dr. Sebastian Bruns

Session 2:

Americas as a market & Mexican Naval Strategy



Americas as a market



Introduction

The seas and oceans surrounding Latin America are important for local economies as they are used for fishing, exploration of natural resources (such as oil and natural gas) and tourism. It is also an important area for global shipping, as the Panama Canal remains as one of the principal maritime hotspots in the world, connecting the east coasts of North- and South America with Asia.

As in other parts of the world,
the maritime domain is of
growing importance in the
Americas region

Meanwhile the vast waters also offer ample opportunities for illegal practices. The trafficking of drugs remains a big challenge, while also human trafficking is on the rise and illegal fishery is of growing concern. Other threats, such as natural disasters, oil spills or accidents, are also likely probable to occur more and more, due to climate change and increased maritime traffic.

The reality of presence at sea

For most of the countries in Latin America and the Caribbean the situation is that the navies and coast guards' fleets do not have the capability to adequately react on the challenges they face. Their fleets consist of ageing ships, insufficient budgets and many vessels that are not "fit for purpose". The impact of COVID-19 will most likely create budget pressure on navies or coast guards and create setbacks to expand or modernize their fleets.

Focus on security and development

In my opinion the navies and coast guards need to focus for the next 5 years on projects that “deliver continuous and credible maritime

The next decade will not be an easy one for Latin American navies and coast guards

presence that supports the security and development of their country”. This will mean that the following investments are the most likely, because they are affordable and contribute to both security and development:

- Small and medium-sized vessels that increase the capability to continuously patrol the territorial waters and Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ);
- Vessels and equipment that provide logistical support, especially during and after natural disasters;
- Increase the efficiency and output of organizations by investing in maintenance, spare parts, training and international cooperation;
- Larger, high-visibility projects that contribute to national security and development, that create jobs, transfer of technology and add know-how to local economies (i.e. the POLA in Mexico, or the BICM in Colombia).

Conclusion

The next decade will not be an easy one for Latin American navies and coast guards as budgets are under pressure, and at the same time the need for modern equipment is clear. The existing fleets are ageing, and

many are not fit for purpose, creating a gap between available military maritime capabilities and operational requirements. If investments budgets become available, these will be probably directed to platforms that contribute to the security and development of a country, therefore focusing on ships that can operate in the territorial waters and EEZ.

Magiel Venema



Mexican Naval Strategy



The country has more than 3 million square kilometers of EEZ, 11,000 kilometers of coastlines and it plays a key role in keeping SLOCs stable and under "good order" (especially those in the Pacific).

Despite the fact that Mexico does not have a National Security Policy or strategy whatsoever (nor a maritime policy) it does have a Naval Strategy.

This Naval Strategy is named "Operational Concept", and it relates to five key variables: Mexican strategic culture, its maritime position, geopolitics, availability of resources and organizational culture. In this regard, despite the fact that Mexico has never had a maritime culture as a whole, the Navy has managed to consolidate an organizational culture which serves as the main basis for its doctrine.

Due to the enormous EEZ and increasing geopolitical weight in the region, the Navy should gain more support

Mexico's maritime domain has different challenges on the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans. On the Pacific, IUU fishing is a growing concern. This is especially linked to the illegal Chinese fishing fleets. On the Atlantic, growing piracy in the Gulf of Mexico is also a pressing issue that deserves more attention.

The Mexican Navy Doctrinal Evolution started in the 1980s and it has kept a good pace over the following decades. Nevertheless, the current Administration has halted *all* naval procurement projects and modernization projects.

For a country with such an enormous EEZ and increasing geopolitical weight in the region, the Navy should gain more support both by the political establishment and the entire society. Hence "Sea Blindness" remains the most pressing issue in the coming future.

Christian Ehrlich



Session 3

Canada & USA

Canada

Although often thought of by Canadians as a negligible naval power, the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) has long been a contributor to global naval operations. From the amphibious liberation of Europe in the Second World War to maintaining a consistent naval presence in the Arabian Sea in the aftermath of 9/11, the RCN stands out from other naval powers for the regularity and frequency of its trans-oceanic deployments.

The RCN stands out from other naval powers for the regularity and frequency of its trans-oceanic deployments. Due in part to its geographic isolation, Canada plays a security provider role more than as a recipient of it, especially in the NATO context, and the RCN's activities in recent decades illustrate this. Although faring the post-Cold War decline of surface combatants better than some of its Western allies, its current backbone of twelve Halifax class frigates have recently passed their midlife extension and their replacements are being finalized. The new Canadian Surface Combatant (CSC) are planned to be fifteen hulls based on the British Type 26 frigate, but significantly modified to incorporate a robust air defense system buttressed by the SPY-7 active phased array radar, 32 Mk. 41 VLS cells, and 6 ExLS cells for quad-packed Sea Ceptor close-in defense missiles. This is due to Canada's current lack of long-range air defense capabilities following the decommissioning of their Iroquois class destroyers in the mid-2010s.

As a country with two coastlines separated by a continent, the otherwise medium-sized RCN can be more usefully thought of as two small navies. In this context, the RCN sees maximizing the utility of each hull across the entire range of maritime security and naval warfare spectrum to be paramount: the traditional alternative of having a fleet of multi-class vessels that is further split between the two coasts had made for significant operational and logistical challenges in terms of

The otherwise medium-sized
RCN can be more usefully
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ensuring sufficient availability. Building 15 CSC to the high level of capability currently expected of them will not be cheap, however, and there are ongoing concerns as to their affordability. At the same time, the RCN is in the process of putting into service six Harry Dewolf Arctic and Offshore Patrol Vessels. These 6600t ships will provide a constabulary presence along all three coasts during their most active shipping seasons while also having the endurance to contribute to maritime security and capacity building operations abroad at other times of the year.

The greatest uncertainty lies, however, in the fate of the submarine force: its four Victoria class submarines, purchased second-hand from the UK in the 1990s, have experienced challenges in readiness. Though occasionally deploying across the Atlantic and Pacific, the lack of spare parts will continue to limit their reliability and availability for the

remainder of their lifespan. There are currently no plans to procure replacements, and with the CSC's ambitious scope with its high financial requirements, the likelihood of a full submarine replacement in the 2030s would appear to be low.

Nonetheless, should plans for 15 CSCs come to fruition, the RCN will provide a robust surface combat fleet that can contribute to the entire array of alliance operations around the globe.

US Pacific Fleet



Timothy Choi



USA



The theme of this session focused on a very timely piece of current events, namely the U.S. Navy in during the campaign and presidency of Donald Trump, 2016-2021. Signs of a naval renewal could be found as early as the presidential campaign in the run-up to the general election in that a "355-ship navy" was part of the Republican Party/Donald Trump platform.

Once elected, the two capstone national security documents of the Trump administration focused on great-power competition that

The advance of a particular number of ships into a political program was the first such endeavor since the Ronald Reagan campaign of 1980

necessitates global maritime views. The National Security Strategy (NSS) and the National Defense Strategy (NDS) were synched in giving the Navy a comparatively larger – or at least more important – role. Sadly, the Navy's reality in the one-term presidency was less encouraging. The service was plagued by scandals and crises (including a series of deadly collisions at sea). Its fleet architecture lacked arguments that

convince the US Congress to fund 355 ships and consequently, the Navy continued to hover slightly below the 300-ship-bar.

Surprisingly, the final months of the Trump presidency saw a flurry of action, then. These included the publication of the Tri-Service Maritime Strategy (together with the U.S. Coast Guard and the Marine Corps) and a new 30-year-shipbuilding strategy (both in December 2020) and "Blue Arctic", a maritime strategy for the High North (January 2021). These mark significant points of departure for the Navy during the administration of Joe Biden and beyond. With federal budgets deficits rising and shifting domestic priorities in addition to possible inter-service rivalries – and tipping-point events such as regional conflicts escalating – a challenging future for the service lies ahead. Perhaps it might be useful to remind oneself of some of the recurring themes of American naval strategy in the 2000s: great-power competition, the focus on the Indo-Pacific, "warfighting first", an emphasis on readiness, and international cooperation should remain central to the principal American sea service going into the 2020s.

Rapporteur: Dr. Sebastian Bruns

An expanded version of this discussion can be found in a paper that Prof. Dombrowski is preparing on the matter at the time of publication of this report, titled "Strategic Renaissance or False Dawn?"



Session 4

Seapower from a South American Perspective & Colombian Naval Strategy

Seapower from a South American Perspective



Central America and the Caribbean Basin are the link between North and Latin America. The region is characterized by geographical proximity and political, cultural and economic heterogeneity. It is further a hub for international trade with the eastern entrance of the Panama Canal located in the heart of the region. The proximity leads

A lack of cooperation together with the favorable geography have created somewhat of a perfect storm for sea-based crime.

to overlapping EEZ's leaving literally not a single area of unregulated high seas in the region. While a similar situation in Baltic Sea has led to a dense system of mutual trust and cooperation, it is a source of permanent conflict in the Caribbean. Most of the neighboring countries are facing various degrees of conflict and disorder and a poor socio-economic and political environment. Instead of cooperation, competition and mutual distrust are the driving political factors. This has led to a plethora of multi- and bilateral agreements in the field of law enforcement and maritime security each of it incorporating some states, but barely non being able to provide a common base for cooperation or a general level playing field.

This lack of cooperation together with the favorable geography have created somewhat of a perfect storm for sea-based crime. First and foremost illegal drug trafficking to both, North America but also Europe. But also human and arms trafficking as well as piracy and armed robbery at sea. Without the USA as the main facilitator and executor of countermeasures, it is safe to say that drugs could float almost untouched and –detected thru the region.

The Caribbean states must enhance mutual trust and cooperation, establish information sharing agreements to generate a common maritime security operational picture and overcome territorial disputes to be able to act jointly against maritime crime and illegal drug trafficking.

Rapporteur: Johannes Peters

Colombian Naval Strategy



Colombia's current strategic framework is based on the Naval Development Plan 2042, which - as its names suggests - projects naval national strategy for the coming 20 years. The plan should be understood as a continuation of the local ambitions to project the navy with a regional outreach.

This objective is based on the assumption that Colombia could and should provide security assistance through several security cooperation frameworks such as the triangular cooperation, bilateral cooperation agreements with countries in the region, international maritime

Colombia could and should
provide security assistance
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cooperation frameworks

exercises and the Antarctic expedition. The objective also includes the ambitious plans to participate more actively in multilateral frameworks such as NATO, the United Nations, and increase cooperation work through the yearly counter-narcotics exercise *Orion* in the Caribbean.

Despite these positive trends and the increasing commitment to international security on maritime affairs, there are at least serious concerns which should be closely observed to predict/understand the effectivity of these plans. The first relates to budget. Concerning is the fact that while personnel spending increases, procurement budget has been reduced by half in the last twenty years. In the future, the Navy – as well as all of the security forces – will have to face even more responsibilities to cover costs related to personnel, leaving it with even less funds to replace its vessels, which is vital if it wants to play a role in international security cooperation.

Procurement projects aim at replacing aging vessels. The Navy prioritizes the build-up of capabilities in areas such as intelligence and maritime awareness, anti-aircraft capabilities, amphibious operations, littoral defense, transport and humanitarian relief. For this purpose, the so-called PROCYON plan looks to replace four current *Almirante Padilla*-class frigates, four submarines, three patrol vessels (+ one additional one) and add at least two maritime patrol aircrafts and two landing dock ships.

The modernization of the strategic platforms, despite budgetary constraints and an ambitious procurement program, project an

In perspective, Colombian naval strategy seems to be more concerned about the present than the future itself.

increase of personnel by one third in the coming 20 years (31.000 > 41.000). However, this change does not mean a transformation of force distribution. Colombian Marines, which represent half of the Navy personnel, will remain at their current size despite the purported modernization and

changes in the Colombian strategic landscape. Qualitatively, the force structure will remain the same: riverine battalions (15) will increase by one and current marine battalions (5) are foreseen to transform into defense coast battalions (2) and amphibious battalions (3) should constitute the core of a future small amphibious unit.

Summing up, the Naval Development Plan 2042 continues the transformation in the Navy set since mid-2005, aims at the consolidation of international cooperation, but it does not necessarily involve a qualitative change and adaptation to security challenges in domestic affairs. In perspective, Colombian naval strategy seems to be more concerned about the present than the future itself.

Picture by US Navy



Rafael Uribe-Neira



Session 5

Brazilian Naval Strategy & China and IUU Problems in South America

Brazilian Naval Strategy



Since its creation in 1822, the Brazilian Navy has been the strongest navy of Latin America, allowing Brazil to maintain the status of a regional seapower until today. Even being considered a small navy, the Brazilian Navy has 112 vessels and is able to efficiently utilize its resources in a broad spectrum of activities of limited use of force. The Brazilian Navy, which is also composed by the Brazilian Marine Corps, focuses on

Since its creation, the Brazilian Navy has been the strongest navy of Latin America

maintaining peace and security in the South Atlantic Ocean and has a strong cooperative character, participating actively in UN Peace Operations and in regional exercises with allies.

It is important to underline that the several economic and politic crises in Brazil have delayed and stagnated the development of the Navy. Also, the lack of discussion of maritime issues in the political institutions deeply affect the improvement of public politics for the Navy. Another critic can be made to the vortex of resources that exists in still maintaining the Nuclear Submarine Program, which is in service since the 1970s and did not produce results until this day. As a product of the Military Dictatorship's ambitions, it is still questioned why the Brazilian Navy would need a nuclear submarine today, in a completely different era.

PEM 2040

The latest strategic document released by the Brazilian Navy, and so far the more elaborated and bolder, is the Strategic Plan of the Navy 2040 (PEM 2040) which brings the Brazilian Navy to the XXI century's maritime environment. The key aspects of the document are:

- The document presents the main concepts of Sea Power for the Navy and clearly communicates it for a broader audience, also drawing attention to the importance of maritime issues for the nation.
- Reinforces two particularly important geopolitical concepts for the

The area of strategic maritime importance consists of the 3,5 million km² of internal waters and all the South Atlantic

Brazilian Naval Strategy: the Brazilian Strategic Surroundings and the Blue Amazon. The Brazilian Strategic Surroundings is the area of vital importance for Brazil's Maritime Security which includes all of the South Atlantic Ocean, even the Western Coast of Africa and the Coast of Antarctica. The Blue Amazon is an area, which is part of the Brazilian Jurisdictional Waters, comprehending about 3.5 million km². It is a maritime region extremely rich in natural resources, including the pre-salt reserves.

- Points the major threats to maritime security such as Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported Fishing, Cyberthreats, Piracy, and Threats to the Environment.

The document presents to the public the "Strategic Programs of the Navy", where each program intends to improve the capacity of the Navy to project power and be able to establish a stable and secure

maritime environment in the South Atlantic. For example, one of the programs involves the subprograms of the Tamandaré Frigates, which focuses on the construction of a new class of frigates for the Navy to replace older vessels.

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Andrea Resende

China and IUU Problems in South America



Distant water fishing (DWF) is referred to as fishing outside the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) or the nearby waters of a state on the high seas or within the EEZ of a host nation, usually based on bilateral agreements. China joined the club of DWF nations in 1985 when it identified it as an easy and cost efficient way to provide high value proteins for a growing population. Since then it developed an increasing DWF fleet and industry mostly centered in the provinces Shandong, Fujian and Zhejiang. Its companies, fielding a modern highly capable DWF fleet and operating state of the art facilities on land are bolstered by significant governmental subsidies

The rich stocks of the waters around South America are an important pillar in Chinas DWF strategy.

Chinese companies are operating 24 subsidiaries in South America and are aggressively seeking for mergers and acquisitions to get access to local markets. This goes along with serious consequences for the continent. Local economies and livelihoods are deeply affected by the foreign fishing fleets. The growing Chinese demand for fish meal for domestic food production has led to the fishing of species that had never been fished for on a large scale before. They are an integral part of the food chain for high value stocks risking ruining a whole marine ecosystem.

While becoming more and more sensitive for sustainable and environmental friendly fishing methods in their own EEZ, China has frequently been accused by both, foreign governments and environmental groups and NGOs, for its unsustainable methods abroad and even acclaimed to tolerate illegal, unregulated und unreported (IUU) fishing of its fleet. Following the international pressure, China had adjusted its policy towards more sustainability and responsibility since 2015. Subsidies were reduced and the fleet size capped. It established a DWF compliance and training center to enhance awareness among the crews, adjusted the five-year plans in regard of amounts and issued new DWF regulations addressing IUU problems for the first time. Further, two

high seas fishing moratoria were established in the waters of South America. Whether this new course is a paradigm shift or just a PR stunt and how it will be implemented and enforced is not foreseeable yet.

Rapporteur: Johannes Peters

US Pacific Fleet



The Americas Series

Our Experts

Our ten distinguished speakers come from different continents and institutions and have a wide variety of different research focuses. Nevertheless, they are either already experts with many years of practice or emerging maritime specialists in their field of study. On the following pages, each speaker will be presented sorted by the session they spoke in.



Prof. Sal Mercogliano

Campbell University

Dr. Salvatore R. Mercogliano is an associate professor of history at Campbell University in North Carolina and adjunct professor at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy. He holds a bachelor of science in marine transportation from the State University of New York Maritime College, along with a merchant marine deck officer license (unlimited tonnage 2nd mate), a master's in maritime history and nautical archaeology from East Carolina University, and a PhD in military and naval history from the University of Alabama.



Capt. James Howe

US Coast Guard

Jim Howe served for 27 years in the U.S. Coast Guard, retiring at the rank of Captain (O-6). He is the author of "Red Crew: Fighting the War on Drugs with Reagan's Coast Guard", which chronicles real-world drug and

migrant interdiction operations. Howe served 11 years at sea, and twice in command of Coast Guard cutters. He has earned master degrees in government, strategic studies, and space studies, and now works in the nuclear power industry.



Magiel Venema

Damen Shipyards

Magiel Venema (44) started his career with the Royal Netherlands Navy. His military career included multiple operational deployments, a posting in the Dutch Caribbean and time at the Ministry of Defense. In 2011 he switched to the maritime industry, starting a commercial role with the Dutch shipbuilding company Damen. He worked for many years in Latin-America, from Mexico to Brazil, specializing in Defense business development and sales. Besides graduating from the Royal Netherlands Naval Academy, he also obtained a MA degree in Military History from the University of Amsterdam.



Christian Ehrlich

Founding Director of Riskop

Christian Ehrlich is the founding Director of Riskop, Mexico's leading Strategic intelligence and risk mitigation firm. He has worked as Non Resident Fellow at the Mexican Navy Strategic Research Institute, focusing on strategy and new types of conflict. As graduate of the William J Perry Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies (Defense Policy and Complex Threats), he is currently studying a MA in Maritime Security at Coventry University, UK. Christian has researched and published extensively on Mexico's maritime domain and the country's maritime security challenges.

He has been a speaker at both the Mexican Defense Secretariat's National Defense College and the Mexican Navy Center for Higher Studies.



Timothy Choi

University of Calgary

Timothy Choi is a PhD Candidate at the University of Calgary's Centre for Military, Security and Strategic Studies, where his dissertation employs a broadened notion of sea control to analyze the influence of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea on the force structures and peacetime operations of three Arctic countries: Canada, Denmark, and Norway. His latest publication is "Danish Naval Evolution in the Arctic: Developments through the Unipolar Moment" in Kennedy and Wilson's *Navies in Multipolar Worlds* by Routledge; he also has a chapter on Canadian maritime forces in *Grey and White Hulls* by Bowers and Koh, as well as articles in the *Arctic Yearbook* and *Ocean Development and International Law*. He serves as a board member of the *Canadian Naval Review* and is also its Photo Editor.



Prof. Peter Dombrowski

Naval War College

Prof. Peter Dombrowski is the Director of the Cyber and Innovation Policy Institute and a professor of strategy in the Strategic and Operational Research Department. Previous positions include chair of the Strategic Research Department, editor of the Naval War College Review, co-editor of International Studies Quarterly, and associate professor of political science at Iowa State University. Dombrowski is the author of over 65 publications. His most recent book is, "The End of Grand Strategy: U.S. Maritime Operations in the 21st Century" (Cornell 2018). He received his B.A. from Williams College and an M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Maryland.



Dr. Samuel Rivera Páez

Escuela Superior de Guerra

Samuel Rivera-Páez holds a PhD (Cum Laude) in Social and Human Sciences from the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana and is Captain

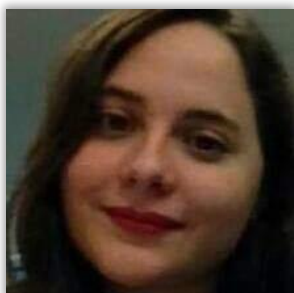
(Ret) of the Colombian Navy. He is a Professor at the Colombian National War College and Leader of the Critical Mass Research Group of that institution. He also collaborates as consultant for the Caribbean and Latin America of the Global Maritime Crime Program of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). He has published several articles, book chapters and edited books on Maritime Affairs such as "Maritime Interests of Colombia, proposals and reflections for the construction of a Maritime Country" and "Maritime Security: Counter-Terrorism Lessons from Maritime Piracy and Narcotics Interdiction".



Rafael Uribe-Neira

Independent Scholar

Rafael Uribe-Neira graduated in June 2020 with distinction from M.A. Peace and Conflict Studies at the Otto-von-Guericke University in Magdeburg, Germany. He focuses his research on civil-military relations, narratives in security aid, and lots of pop culture. Since his time as a research assistant at the Institute for Security Policy at Kiel University (ISPK) in the fall of 2018 and as an intern at the UN in Colombia in Winter 2018/2019, he developed a keen interest in the Caribbean and its global ties. Follow him on Twitter @RafaelUribeN.



Andrea Resende de Souza

PUC Minas

Andrea Luiza Fontes Resende de Souza is a PhD candidate in International Relations at the Pontifical Catholic University of Minas Gerais – PUC MINAS, Brazil, where she is developing a thesis about the United States Overseas Basing System. She holds a master degree in International Relations also from PUC MINAS, where she defended a dissertation about the presence of the U.S. Naval Forces in the South Atlantic. She is also a voluntary researcher in the Simulation and Scenarios Laboratory of the Brazilian Naval War College, member of the Corbett Centre for Maritime Policy Studies and of the Center for International Maritime Security (CIMSEC) and has published articles on various subjects ranging from gunboat diplomacy to securitization in South America.



Prof. Tabitha Grace Mallory

China Ocean Institute & University of Washington

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