

Celebrating FIU's 10th Annual Hemispheric Security Conference

SECURING THE FUTURE OF THE AMERICAS

May 12-13, 2025

Welcome to #HSC2025



Dear Esteemed Guests, Speakers, and Participants,

On behalf of Florida International University, it is my great privilege to welcome you to the 10th Annual Hemispheric Security Conference, co-hosted by FIU's Jack D. Gordon Institute for Public Policy and Argentina's Taeda Foundation. As Interim President, I am thrilled to celebrate this milestone event, which has become a cornerstone of dialogue on the Western Hemisphere's most critical security challenges. This conference aligns with FIU's Experience Impact 2030 strategic plan, which



positions our university as a global leader in research, education, and strategic partnerships. By convening government officials, military leaders, scholars, and innovators from across the Americas, we foster collaboration that drives solutions to issues like economic security, emerging technology, transnational crime, and environmental security. Your participation strengthens FIU's mission to provide our students with transformative experiences, produce impactful research, and build alliances that shape a more secure and prosperous future.

Miami, the gateway to the Americas, is the perfect backdrop for these discussions, and FIU's diverse community reflects the hemisphere we serve. Over the next two days, your insights will inspire new ideas and partnerships that resonate far beyond our campus.

Thank you for joining us. I wish you an engaging and productive conference as we work together to advance hemispheric security.

Sincerely,

Jeanette Nuñez
Interim President
Florida International University

Welcome to #HSC2025



Welcome to Florida International University and the 10th Annual Hemispheric Security Conference. As the gateway to Latin America and the Caribbean, Miami serves as the perfect venue for the region's prominent thought leaders, policymakers, and industry executives to gather, discuss, and take concrete action on the host of security threats and challenges across all domains. Thank you to our hosts, the Jack D. Gordon Institute for Public Policy and Fundación TAEDA for organizing this impactful event.

The United States and the many nations and territories of this hemisphere are woven together in a vibrant tapestry.

Our shared cultural traditions, family bonds, economic aspirations, and devotion to fundamental democratic values are the fibers that link us all. Interconnected, we steadfastly pursue lasting security, stability, and prosperity. The enduring commitment to these values is the cornerstone of our common partnerships.

A multitude of threats currently endanger our collective vision. China continues its methodical incursion into our shared neighborhood and is leveraging all instruments of national power to export its authoritarian model. Opaque investment practices, resource extraction, and potential dual-use projects – from ports to space – are hallmarks of the malign influence and activities which infringe upon the sovereignty of our Partners and jeopardize the United States' national security. Russia persists in its engagement with traditional partners in Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela and is using malign propaganda, arms sales, military engagements, and force projection to diminish U.S. regional influence and interests. Simultaneously, Transnational Criminal Organizations fuel instability through illicit trafficking and widespread violence that undermines the rule of law and is having devastating effects across the hemisphere. These crises are further exacerbated by the region's geographic vulnerability to frequent natural disasters.

Deliberate and meaningful action is needed now, more than ever, or the Americas, will forever change. Partnerships are the most effective approach to countering our shared security and economic concerns. These two days provide us all with a unique opportunity to build a common understanding, strengthen relationships, and set in motion those next steps we must take to realize the promise of the Western Hemisphere. Let's embrace this forum to collaborate, innovate, and forge a brighter future for all. Together, we are Securing the Future of the Americas.

Admiral Alvin Holsey, United States Navy
Commander, United States Southern Command



Agenda

Monday, May 12

08:00 - 09:00	FACULTY CLUB	NETWORKING BREAKFAST
09:00 - 09:05	MAIN BALLROOM	CONFERENCE OPENING LELAND LAZARUS, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, FIU JACK D. GORDON INSTITUTE
09:05 - 09:20	MAIN BALLROOM	WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS: SECURING THE FUTURE OF THE AMERICAS BRIAN FONSEÇA, DIRECTOR, FIU JACK D. GORDON INSTITUTE JEANETTE NUÑEZ, PRESIDENT FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY MARIO MONTOTO, PRESIDENT, TAEDA FOUNDATION
09:20 - 09:50	MAIN BALLROOM	FIRESIDE CHAT WITH COMMANDER OF UNITES STATES SOUTHERN COMMAND MODERATED BY: ERIC FARNSWORTH, VICE PRESIDENT, AS/COA ADM. ALVIN HOLSEY, COMMANDER, U.S. SOUTHERN COMMAND
09:50 - 10:40	MAIN BALLROOM	U.S. POLICY IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE PANEL MODERATED BY: FRANK MORA, FORMER AMBASSADOR TO THE OAS DAN RESTREPO, FORMER NSC DURING THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION JUAN CRUZ, FORMER NSC UNDER THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION
10:40 - 11:10	FACULTY CLUB	COFFEE BREAK
11:10 - 12:10	MAIN BALLROOM	PLENARY SESSION: ECONOMIC SECURITY AND NATIONAL SECURITY PANEL MODERATED BY: ARANTXA LOIZAGA, NETWORK NEWS ANCHOR, NBCUNIVERSAL TELEMUNDO GERARD JOHNSON, SENIOR ADVISOR TO THE CARIBBEAN, SEAF MARTIN RETRADO, FORMER CENTRAL BANK PRESIDENT, ARGENTINA, SENIOR FELLOW, FIU JACK D. GORDON INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC POLICY SYLVIA CESARATTO, CONSUL GENERAL, CANADIAN CONSULATE OF MIAMI CARLOS DÍAZ-ROSILLO, FOUNDING DIRECTOR, FIU ADAM SMITH CENTER FOR ECONOMIC FREEDOM
12:10 - 13:00	FACULTY CLUB	NETWORKING LUNCH
13:00 - 14:00	MAIN BALLROOM	BREAKOUT SESSION: PORT SECURITY PANEL MODERATED BY: RYAN BERG, DIRECTOR, LATIN AMERICAN PROGRAM, CSIS FREDERICK P. WONG, JR., DEPUTY DIRECTOR, PORTMIAMI ALEXANDRE MUYL, HEAD OF SECURITY, CMA CGM LT. COL. KIRK JOHNSON, VICE PRESIDENT, PORT AUTHORITY JAMAICA AZEEM ALI, SECURITY SUPERINTENDENT, PORT AUTHORITY TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
	EAST BALLROOM	BREAKOUT SESSION: CRITICAL MINERALS PANEL MODERATED BY: ANTHONY BATT, SOUTHERN COMMAND MAHNAZ KHAN, VICE PRESIDENT OF POLICY, SILVERADO POLICY ACCELERATOR YAMILEE BASTIEN, PRINCIPAL CONSULTANT, FULCRUM VENTURES, LLC KJIRSTIN BREURE, PRESIDENT AND CEO, HYDROGRAPH ALI RAHMAN, PRESIDENT AND CEO, LEXI LITHIUM
14:00 - 14:30	FACULTY CLUB	COFFEE BREAK
14:30 - 15:00	MAIN BALLROOM	FIRESIDE CHAT WITH THE MINISTER FOR CANAL AFFAIRS, PANAMA MODERATED BY: KRISTINA ROSALES, SENIOR DIRECTOR, PROGRAMMING AND REGIONAL INITIATIVES, CONCORDIA JOSE RAMON ICAZA CLEMENT, MINISTER FOR CANAL AFFAIRS, PANAMA

Agenda

Monday, May 12

15:00 - 16:00	MAIN BALLROOM	PLENARY SESSION: EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES PANEL MODERATED BY: TYLER JOHNSON , DIRECTOR, DEFENSE AND DUAL USE-INNOVATION, EMERGE AMERICAS JAVIER ALBERTO AYALA AMAYA , PRESIDENT, UNIVERSIDAD MILITAR NUEVA GRANADA, COLOMBIA SAIF ISHOOF , CEO, LAB22C SANDRA QUINCOSES , SENIOR THREAT ANALYSIS, GOOGLE ANDREW SPEAR , DIRECTOR OF INTELLIGENCE, STRIDER TECHNOLOGIES
16:00 - 17:00	MAIN BALLROOM	BREAKOUT SESSION: CYBERSECURITY PANEL MODERATED BY: MIKE ASENCIO , DIRECTOR OF CYBERSECURITY POLICY, FIU JACK D. GORDON INSTITUTE CARLOS SOLAR , SENIOR FELLOW, RUSI DONAVON JOHNSON , ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY JOVIANNA GONZALEZ , PRESIDENT & CEO, DIGITAL FORENSICS NOW MARC ASTURIAS , SVP MARKETING AND FIELD CHIEF INFORMATION SECURITY OFFICER - GOVERNMENT, LATIN AMERICA, THE CARIBBEAN, AND CANADA, FORTINET
	EAST BALLROOM	BREAKOUT SESSION: SPACE PANEL MODERATED BY: GUIDO TORRES , EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, IRREGULAR WARFARE INITIATIVE BRUNO MARTINI , RESEARCHER, BRAZILIAN AIR FORCE UNIVERSITY LAURA DELGADO LOPEZ , NON-RESIDENT SPACE POLICY FELLOW, PERRY CENTER DEIRDRE KIRSTEN TATLOW , SENIOR REPORTER FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, NEWSWEEK
17:00 - 17:05	MAIN BALLROOM	DAY 1 WRAP-UP ESTELA ROTMISTROVSKY , CEO, MANAH GROUP
17:05 - 17:10	MAIN BALLROOM	DAY 1 ADJOURNMENT LELAND LAZARUS , ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, FIU JACK D. GORDON INSTITUTE
17:10 - 19:00	FACULTY CLUB	INVITE ONLY RECEPTION

Agenda

Tuesday, May 13

08:00 - 09:00	FACULTY CLUB	NETWORKING BREAKFAST
09:00 - 09:01	MAIN BALLROOM	CONFERENCE OPENING & WELCOME LELAND LAZARUS , ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, FIU JACK D. GORDON INSTITUTE
09:02 - 09:05	MAIN BALLROOM	OPENING REMARKS: SECURING THE FUTURE OF THE AMERICAS SHLOMI DINAR , DEAN, FIU STEVEN J. GREEN SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS
09:05 - 09:45	MAIN BALLROOM	TREN DE ARAGUA PANEL: MODERATED BY: ANTHONY PEREIRA , DIRECTOR, FIU KIMBERLY GREEN LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN CENTER DOUGLAS FARAH , SENIOR ADVISOR ON TRANSNATIONAL CRIME, TAEDA FOUNDATION PABLO ZEBALLOS , SENIOR ADVISOR, TAEDA FOUNDATION EDUARDO GAMARRA , ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, FIU JACK D. GORDON INSTITUTE MYAH HAVERTONG , DOCTORAL CANDIDATE OF INTERNATIONAL CRIME AND JUSTICE, FIU
09:45 - 10:35	MAIN BALLROOM	INNOVATION PANEL MODERATED BY: MARK ROSENBERG , SENIOR FELLOW, FIU JACK D. GORDON INSTITUTE FERNANDO MARENGO , CHIEF ECONOMIST AND PARTNER, BLACK TORO GLOBAL INVESTMENTS JENNIFER PRESCOTT , DIRECTOR FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND TAX POLICY AND DIRECTOR OF LATIN AMERICAN PUBLIC POLICY, AMAZON WEB SERVICES RAMON ESCOBAR , MANAGING DIRECTOR, ACTUM
10:35 - 11:00	FACULTY CLUB	COFFEE BREAK
11:00 - 12:00	MAIN BALLROOM	PLENARY SESSION: TRANSNATIONAL CRIME PANEL MODERATED BY: KATHARINA KRAKOW , REGIONAL PROJECT MANAGER LATIN AMERICA, FRIEDRICH NAUMANN FOUNDATION PABLO ZEBALLOS , SENIOR ADVISOR, TAEDA FOUNDATION FELIX MARADIACA , PRESIDENT, RELIAL EDUARDO GAMARRA , ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, FIU JACK D. GORDON INSTITUTE WOLF PAMPHILE , EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, HAITI POLICY HOUSE
12:00 - 13:00	FACULTY CLUB	NETWORKING LUNCH BRIEF REMARKS FROM RAFAEL GROSSI
	EAST BALLROOM	LUNCH PANEL: WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY MODERATED BY: DUILIA TURNER , SENIOR FELLOW, FIU JACK D. GORDON INSTITUTE KARIN L. JOHNSTON , RESEARCH DIRECTOR, WOMEN IN INTERNATIONAL SECURITY JOAN JOHNSON FREESE , HARVARD EXTENSION SCHOOL PROFESSOR AND PROFESSOR EMERITUS, NAVAL WAR COLLEGE GABRIELA HOBERMAN , DIRECTOR OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMS, FIU KIMBERLY GREEN LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN CENTER

Agenda

Tuesday, May 13

13:00 - 14:00	EAST BALLROOM	BREAKOUT SESSION: MONEY LAUNDERING PANEL MODERATED BY: NICHOLAS SCHUMANN, US FINANCIAL CRIME FRAMEWORK, HSBC AMANDA GORE , DIRECTOR, CENTRE FOR GLOBAL ADVANCEMENT ANGELA BRUHJELL , SENIOR DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS, C4ADS MARTIN VLADIMIROV , DIRECTOR, GEOECONOMICS, CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF DEMOCRACY GUILLERMO LAGARDA CUEVAS , CONSULTANT, INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK
	MAIN BALLROOM	BREAKOUT SESSION: EXTRA REGIONAL ACTORS PANEL MODERATED BY: RUSLAN STEFANOV, PROGRAM DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF DEMOCRACY JESSICA LUDWIG , GLOBAL POLICY FELLOW, GEORGE W. BUSH INSTITUTE NANCY HELENA ARELLANO SUAREZ , PROGRAM DIRECTOR, CEDRO VLADIMIR ROUVINSKI , ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL STUDIES, ICSI DOUGLAS FARAH , SENIOR ADVISOR ON TRANSNATIONAL CRIME, TAEDA FOUNDATION
14:00 - 14:30	FACULTY CLUB	COFFEE BREAK
14:30 - 15:30	MAIN BALLROOM	PLENARY SESSION: ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY PANEL MODERATED BY: WAZIM MOWLA, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, ATLANTIC COUNCIL MARILYN CRICHLAW , WATER RESOURCES CONSULTANT, HYDROLOGIST AND FORMER GENERAL MANAGER HUGO RODRIGUEZ MANTILLA , REGIONAL MANAGER, GRAN SANTANDER, COLOMBIA ANDREA CROSTA , EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, EARTH LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL
15:30 - 16:30	MAIN BALLROOM	BREAKOUT SESSION: ANTARCTIC PANEL MODERATED BY: YANINA KOCAN, DIRECTOR, TAEDA FOUNDATION CARLOS FLESIA , RETIRED COLONEL OF ARGENTINE ARMY, TAEDA FOUNDATION JUAN PABLO TORO , EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ATHENALAB JUAN IGNACIO CANEPA , ACADEMIC SECRETARY, TAEDA FOUNDATION
	EAST BALLROOM	BREAKOUT SESSION: ILLEGAL FISHING PANEL MODERATED BY: MARK BOND, RESEARCH ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, FIU INSTITUTE OF ENVIRONMENT SAM MCGOVERN , PORTFOLIO MANAGER, C4ADS KATY DALTON , DWF SENIOR PROGRAM MANAGER, CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL CINA FIORE , GLOBAL CAMPAIGN ADVISOR, COALITION FOR FISHERIES TRANSPARENCY GREGG CASAD , SENIOR COMPLIANCE ADVISOR, WILDAID
16:30 - 16:40	MAIN BALLROOM	CLOSING REMARKS LELAND LAZARUS , ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, FIU JACK D. GORDON INSTITUTE

Meet our Speakers



Leland Lazarus serves as Associate Director of National Security at Florida International University's Jack D. Gordon Institute of Public Policy. He is an expert on China-Latin America relations, and manages a team of researchers and interns that collect data and analysis on U.S. national security and governance in Latin America and the Caribbean.



Brian Fonseca is Director of the Jack D. Gordon Institute for Public Policy and an adjunct professor in the Department of Politics and International Relations at Florida International University's (FIU) Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs. He is the founding Executive Director of Cybersecurity@FIU, FIU's university-wide interdisciplinary emerging preeminent program.



Jeanette M. Nuñez is the Interim President of Florida International University. She was appointed to this position on February 7, 2025. Prior to her appointment as Interim President, Mrs. Nuñez served as Florida's Lieutenant Governor. She was first elected in 2018 and subsequently re-elected in 2022. Mrs. Nuñez oversaw the Florida Department of Health and served as Chair of Space Florida.



Mario Montoto is the President of the TAEDA Foundation. He leads these specialized entities in organizing events and seminars addressing global strategic issues such as natural resources, technology, and sustainable development with technological innovation. Additionally, he is responsible for the DEF Magazine.



Admiral Alvin Holsey is Commander of U.S. Southern Command. Adm. Holsey is a native of Fort Valley, Georgia and was commissioned through the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps (NROTC) program at Morehouse College in 1988, where he received a degree in Computer Science. He earned a Master of Science in Management from Troy State University in 1995 and attended the Joint Forces Staff College in 2010.

Meet our Speakers



Eric Farnsworth is the Vice President of the Council of the Americas and the Americas Society. He leads the Washington office of AS/COA with a passion for promoting the importance of the Western Hemisphere for U.S. economic, security, and strategic interests. A recognized expert, he maintains an important policy leadership and advocacy role across a broad range of issues.



Frank O. Mora, Ph.D., is professor of politics and international relations at Florida International University. Dr. Mora is a former U.S. ambassador to the Organization of American States. From 2013 to 2020, Dr. Mora served as director of the Kimberly Green Latin American and Caribbean Center at FIU. He was also a senior researcher at FIU's Jack D. Gordon Institute for Public Policy.



Dan Restrepo served as the principal advisor to President Barack Obama on issues related to Latin America, the Caribbean, and Canada, serving as special assistant to the president and senior director for Western Hemisphere affairs at the National Security Council from March 2009 to July 2012 and as an advisor to and surrogate for Obama for America during the 2008 and 2012 campaigns.



Juan Cruz is a Senior Advisor of Dinámica Americas. Juan retired as a senior U.S. government executive who served in Latin America in various roles, culminating a nearly 35-year government career as President Trump's Special Assistant for the Western Hemisphere and top National Security Council advisor for the Americas.



Arantxa Loizaga has served as the Network News Anchor for NBCUniversal Telemundo Enterprises for 13 years. She has covered multiple international stories on the field that include the killing of 43 students from Ayotzinapa, Guerrero, Mexico back in 2014, the recapture of "El Chapo" in 2016 and "La Tuta" drug lord, and many other breaking news. She is a four-time winner of the the Lone Star Emmy Award, and was nominated 10 times for the award.

Meet our Speakers



Gerard Johnson is a development economist with degrees from Georgetown University and the University of Kent at Canterbury. He also studied economics at Complutense University in Madrid. He worked for most of his professional career with the Inter-American Development Bank, his last posting being General Manager for the Caribbean Department. He met his wife while working with the University of the West Indies.



Martín Redrado is currently a Visiting Professor at Florida International University (2024-2025) and serves as the Director of the Master in Central Banking program at Asia Business School (2019-present). He is also the Director of Fundación Capital, a prominent economic research and public policy think tank (2010-present).



Sylvia Cesaratto is honored to serve as Canada's Consul General in Miami. The relationship between Canada and Florida, as well as Canada and Puerto Rico, is uniquely strong and deeply rooted. It spans multiple dimensions—from Canada being a top source of tourists, to serving as Florida's most significant economic partner, to standing together as steadfast allies in matters of security and defense.



Ryan C. Berg, Ph.D., is director of the Americas Program and head of the Future of Venezuela Initiative at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. He is also an adjunct professor at the Catholic University of America and a course coordinator at the United States Foreign Service Institute. His research focuses on U.S.-Latin America relations, strategic competition and defense policy.



Frederick P. Wong Jr. joined JAXPORT as Chief Operating Officer in early 2018. Wong oversees JAXPORT's terminal operations, public safety and engineering departments. Among the port's major initiatives within his area of responsibility are the deepening of the Jacksonville Harbor and expansion of the port's auto handling capacity.

Meet our Speakers



Alexandre Muyl serves as Head of Security at CMA CGM. Based in Miami, Florida, he supports the Group's mission to foster sustainable globalization by enhancing security frameworks across one of the world's most strategically vital regions. Prior to joining CMA CGM, he was the CEO and Founder of ZENTECH SAS, a consultancy specialized in integrated risk management and economic intelligence.



Lieutenant Colonel Johnson retired from the Jamaica Defence Force in 2020 after over 30 years of service. He joined the Port Authority of Jamaica in 2018 and currently serves as Vice President of Security and Safety. He holds graduate degrees from the University of the West Indies and King's College London and is a graduate of the Royal College of Defence Studies, UK.



Azeem Ali serves as the Security Superintendent at the Port Authority Trinidad and Tobago. Since beginning his career in November 1990, he has steadily progressed through the ranks, including serving as Corporal and fulfilling critical security functions. As an Alternate Port Facility Security Officer (APFSO), [Name] plays a key role in ensuring the safety and regulatory compliance of port operations.



Anthony Batt is a national security and intelligence professional with extensive experience supporting U.S. defense, diplomatic, and private sector missions in high-risk and strategic environments. Currently serving as a Sensitive Activities Operations Specialist for the U.S. Department of the Army in Doral, Florida, he contributes to advanced operational planning and execution in support of U.S. military objectives.



Mahnaz Khan, J.D., is the Vice President of Policy for Critical Supply Chains at Silverado Policy Accelerator, where she leads the critical minerals portfolio. She specializes in developing innovative trade policy frameworks for critical mineral partnerships and analyzing geopolitical policy strategies related to strategic defense and battery dual-use critical minerals.

Meet our Speakers



Yamilee Bastien has thirty years of experience advising companies as they navigate complex political and regulatory environments, both as a career diplomat and as an international business strategist and advisor. She served as the Commercial Attaché at the U.S. Embassies in Brasilia, Brazil and Buenos Aires, Argentina.



Kjirstin Breure serves as President and CEO of Hydrograph. With a 10-year background in emerging technologies, Ms. Breure holds a Masters in Materials Science and Engineering and was the original architect of HydroGraph's initial strategies and commercial plan. As the first employee, she was brought on as COO in 2020, joined the board of directors and was promoted to President in 2022, and was formalized as CEO in 2024.



Ali Rahman, J.D., currently serves as General Counsel for the Global Oil Management Group and a Senior Fellow at the Jack D. Gordon Institute for Public Policy. Mr. Rahman also sits on the board of a number of companies with operations in MENA and Latin America. He has long-standing experience in high-level geopolitics with relationships spanning multiple regions, including Latin America, MENA, West Africa, and the Balkans.



Kristina Rosales Kostrukova is the Senior Director of Programming and Regional Initiatives. In this role, she will focus on Concordia's longer-term programming objectives and spearhead strategy for all regional initiatives. Kristina previously served as the U.S. Department of State's Spanish-language spokesperson and Director of the Media Hub of the Americas, based in Miami, Florida.



Jose Ramón Icaza Clément serves as the Minister for Canal Affairs, Panama. He is an executive professional with extensive experience in the construction industry and deep knowledge in business administration, operations, corporate governance, development and implementation of processes and indicators, business development, and planning.

Meet our Speakers



Tyler Johnson is an accomplished Global Fortune 50 Executive. He has engaged and partnered with executive business leaders across the globe to accelerate growth and expansion in large businesses and early-stage technology software automation start-ups. Tyler has over 30 years' of experience working with some of the largest companies in the world, in addition to co-founding a US-based software technology company.



Javier Alberto Ayala Amaya, Ph.D., currently serves as the Rector of Universidad Militar Nueva Granada in Bogotá, Colombia, where he has led the institution since August 2023. As the head of one of the country's foremost military and academic institutions, he oversees the university's mission to advance education, research, and leadership development in service of national security and societal advancement.



Saif Ishhoof is the founder of Lab22c, serving as a thought partner to companies, founders, funders, and institutions that are looking to grow and scale their impact and reach in Miami's innovation ecosystem. Raised in Miami, Saif is an expert on how the forces of disruption are transforming how we learn, work, and play.



Sandra Quincoses, Ph.D., is an alumna of FIU where she received a bachelor's degree in International Relations and a certificate in Middle East studies. Before and while at FIU, she served as a congressional intern with local Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen for three years. After completion of her bachelor's, she pursued a master's degree from the American Military University and specialized in National Security Studies and Terrorism Studies.



Andrew Spear is the Director of Intelligence at Strider Technologies, a company specializing in strategic intelligence solutions that help organizations protect their intellectual property and supply chains from nation-state threats. In his role, Spear leads efforts to identify and analyze foreign influence operations, with a particular focus on the activities of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in targeting overseas research and innovation ecosystems.

Meet our Speakers



Carlos Solar, Ph.D., is a Senior Research Fellow in Latin American Security at the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), where he leads the Shifting Security in Latin America programme. His research focuses on the intersection of democratic governance, civil-military relations, organized crime, and cybersecurity across the Americas. He holds a PhD from the University of York and was a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Oxford.



Donavon Johnson, Ph.D., is a policy consultant and analyst and a digital transformation specialist whose research and practice focuses on the intersections of public policy, Cybersecurity, and Artificial Intelligence. He is a Fulbright Scholar and renowned author of several titles which includes his most recent book published by Routledge titled "Leadership Fundamentals for Cybersecurity in Public Policy and Administration: Lessons for the Global South".



Jovianna Gonzalez is the founder and CEO of Digital Forensics Now, the first Hispanic woman-owned digital forensics and cybersecurity firm in the United States. With a career that began in 1997 at the Office of State Attorney Katherine Fernandez Rundle, she has since become an internationally recognized expert in digital evidence, incident response, and cybersecurity investigations.



Marc Asturias is the SVP Marketing and Field Chief Information Security Officer – Government, Latin America, the Caribbean, and Canada at Fortinet. With over 30 years of experience in technology and defense, he has held leadership roles at companies including Apple, Cisco, Symantec, and General Dynamics. Asturias is a U.S. Air Force veteran who served at the Inter-American Air Forces Academy, supporting foreign internal defense programs across Latin America.



Miguel Asencio is the Director of the Cybersecurity Policy Program at Florida International University's Jack D. Gordon Institute for Public Policy. He leads initiatives such as the CyberSecureFlorida Training Initiative and USAID's Integrating Cybersecurity into Development, focusing on AI, cyber infrastructure resiliency, and public policy. Asencio holds an M.S. in Curriculum and Instruction with a focus on Learning Technologies and a B.A. from FIU, and is fluent in Spanish.

Meet our Speakers



Laura Delgado Lopez is a Non-Resident Space Policy Fellow at the William J. Perry Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies. With nearly 15 years of experience, she has worked across government, industry, and think tanks on space and defense issues. She was a recent fellow at CSIS focusing on Latin American space programs. Delgado Lopez previously led space policy advocacy at Harris Corporation and the Secure World Foundation.



Bruno Martini, Ph.D., is an aerospace researcher at the Brazilian Air Force University (UNIFA). He holds a Master's in Coastal and Oceanic Systems Dynamics and trained in ocean optics at NASA's Stennis Space Center. Currently a Ph.D. candidate at UNIFA and a visiting scholar at George Washington University's Space Policy Institute, Martini studies space policy and geospatial intelligence in Latin America.



Didi Kirsten Tatlow is Senior Reporter for International Affairs at Newsweek. A veteran journalist and China specialist, she has worked for the Associated Press, The New York Times, and major German media. She co-founded the Atlantic Council's Global China Hub and co-authored *Beyond Espionage: China's Quest for Foreign Technology*.



Guido Torres is Executive Director of the Irregular Warfare Initiative and a U.S. Department of Defense civilian. A former U.S. Army special operations officer, he brings over 20 years of experience in national security and strategic policy. Torres was a 2022–2023 Belfer National Security Fellow at Harvard and is a non-resident senior fellow in the Atlantic Council's Forward Defense program.



Shlomi Dinar, Ph.D., is Dean of the Steven J. Green School of International & Public Affairs and Professor of Politics & International Relations at FIU. He is a leading expert on international environmental politics and security, focusing on transboundary water conflicts and cooperative management of shared rivers. Dinar has authored or edited six books with major academic presses and 100 scholarly articles on environmental governance and resilience.

Meet our Speakers



Douglas Farah is an American national security consultant and journalist. He is president of IBI Consultants and a Senior Visiting Fellow at the National Defense University's Center for Complex Operations. A former Washington Post correspondent and author of books on terrorism financing and illicit trade, Farah currently advises the TAEDA Foundation as Senior Advisor on Transnational Crime.



Pablo Zeballos is a security consultant and former Chilean police officer. He holds a Master's in public security administration and spent 20 years with Chile's Carabineros, specializing in intelligence, counterterrorism, and transnational organized crime. He is now Director of Southern Cone Projects at IBI Consultants, conducting field research on criminal networks and human trafficking in Latin America, as well as Senior Advisor at TAEDA.



Eduardo Gamarra, Ph.D., is Associate Director of Basic Research at FIU's Jack D. Gordon Institute for Public Policy and Professor of Politics & International Relations. He earned his Ph.D. at the University of Pittsburgh and has been on FIU's faculty since 1986. Gamarra directed FIU's Latin American & Caribbean Center (LACC) from 1994–2007 and co-founded the magazine Hemisphere.



Myah Havertong is a doctoral candidate in International Crime & Justice at FIU and a graduate research assistant at the Jack D. Gordon Institute. Her research examines transnational criminal organizations and violent extremism in the Americas. She analyzes how illicit networks operate across Latin America and the Caribbean, including the role of foreign actors. Havertong has also taught undergraduate courses in criminal justice at FIU, focusing on criminology and security policy.



Anthony W. Pereira, Ph.D., is Director of FIU's Kimberly Green Latin American and Caribbean Center. He is a Professor of Politics who served as founding Director of the Brazil Institute at King's College London (2010–2020). Pereira is a noted scholar of Latin American governance, human rights, and security policy. He holds a Ph.D. from Harvard University.

Meet our Speakers



Fernando R. Marengo is Chief Economist and a partner at Black Toro Global Investments, a Miami-based asset management firm. He leads the firm's economic research and strategy, focusing on global and Latin American financial trends. Marengo regularly provides analysis to Latin American media: he has contributed economic commentary to Argentina's La Nación and Forbes Argentina.



Jennifer Prescott is Director of International Trade and Tax Policy and Director of Latin America Public Policy at Amazon Web Services (AWS). Since 2020 she has led AWS's global trade policy strategy and its engagement on Latin American economic issues. Earlier, Prescott served as Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Environment and Natural Resources, negotiating major trade agreements like USMCA and the Trans-Pacific Partnership.



Ramon Escobar brings nearly 20 years of experience in foreign policy and international business. Before joining Actum, Ramon served as the Director for Western Hemisphere Strategy at the National Security Council, The White House, where he played a key role in developing and advancing the U.S. Administration's economic strategy for the Western Hemisphere.



Mark B. Rosenberg, Ph.D., is a political scientist and educational leader. He served as President of Florida International University from 2009 to 2022, during which FIU grew to nearly 54,000 students and significantly expanded its academic and research programs. He is now a Senior Fellow at FIU's Jack D. Gordon Institute for Public Policy. He has authored numerous publications on higher education policy and Latino studies.



Félix Maradiaga is a Nicaraguan academic, political strategist, and democracy advocate. He co-founded the Civil Society Leadership Institute and was a leading opposition pre-candidate in Nicaragua's 2021 presidential election. Maradiaga currently serves as President of the Latin American Liberal Network (RELIAL) and directs the Fundación para el Desarrollo de la Democracia in Managua.

Meet our Speakers



Wolfgang "Wolf" Pamphile is founder and Executive Director of Haiti Policy House, a Washington, D.C.-based think tank on Haitian governance and development. Born in Haiti, he has over a decade of experience organizing diaspora advocacy and humanitarian initiatives. Pamphile has coordinated security and migration forums in the U.S. and testified before Congress on Haitian transnational crime.



Katharina Krakow is the Regional Project Manager for Latin America at the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom. In this role she coordinates the foundation's programs on governance, economic freedom, and security across Latin America, working with civil society and policymakers to promote democratic reforms.



Angela Bruhjell is Director of Analysis at C4ADS, a nonprofit that uses data to combat transnational crime. A former U.S. Marine Corps intelligence officer, she served 21 years in military intelligence before joining C4ADS. At C4ADS she leads research on illicit finance and global trafficking networks, specializing in data analytics and investigative methodology.



Amanda Gore is a forensic accountant and anti-corruption specialist. She is the founder and CEO of the Centre for Global Advancement in Washington, which develops financial crime strategies to protect wildlife and environmental resources. Gore is also a senior researcher at the University of New Haven's Center for Global Affairs, where she studies illicit financial flows in wildlife and fisheries trade in Latin America.



Martin Vladimirov, Ph.D., is Director of Energy and Geoeconomics at Bulgaria's Center for the Study of Democracy. An energy security expert, he researches Europe's energy transition, alternative energy technologies, and the geopolitical influence of global powers. Vladimirov holds a master's degree in Energy Security and International Affairs from Johns Hopkins University's SAIS.

Meet our Speakers



Nicholas J. Schumann is U.S. Head of Financial Crime Framework at HSBC USA. He oversees the bank's engagement in anti-money-laundering partnerships and strategy, and is a U.S. Army Reserve officer. Previously, Schumann spent seven years at the U.S. Treasury's Office of Terrorism and Financial Intelligence, developing sanctions and counter-terror finance measures focused on Latin America and the Caribbean.



Jessica Ludwig is Fellow for Global Policy at the George W. Bush Institute. She leads the Institute's international programs on democratic governance, human rights, and anti-corruption. Ludwig previously served as a senior program officer at the National Endowment for Democracy's International Forum for Democratic Studies, where she co-authored publications on authoritarian "sharp power" influence.



Nancy Helena Arellano Suárez is a Peruvian civil society leader. She is the founding president of VeneActiva, an NGO that empowers Venezuelan migrants in Peru. Arellano also directs projects at CEDRO, a Peruvian center for drug prevention and social development. She is an outspoken advocate for migrants' rights and frequently advises international organizations on humanitarian and migration policy.



Vladimir Rouvinski, Ph.D., is Director of the Laboratory of Politics and International Relations and Associate Professor of Political Studies at Universidad Icesi in Cali, Colombia. Originally from Russia, he earned his Ph.D. in International Development from Hiroshima University. Rouvinski's research focuses on Latin America's relations with Russia and other Asian countries.



Ruslan Stefanov is Program Director and Chief Economist at Bulgaria's Center for the Study of Democracy. He oversees CSD's research on economic security, corruption, and foreign influence. Stefanov co-directs the "Kremlin Playbook" project on Russian influence in Europe and leads efforts to model state capture in Eastern Europe. A veteran anti-corruption specialist, he has built regional networks to analyze illicit finance.

Meet our Speakers



Hugo Rodriguez Mantilla is an industrial engineer graduated from the Industrial University of Santander, with specializations in Senior Management and Management of Social Development Entities. He also graduated from the International Management Program in Local Economic Development and Territorial Marketing. He holds a master's degree in Management of Social Enterprises for Social Innovation and Local Development.



Marilyn Crichlow is a Trinidadian hydrologist and water resources consultant with over 25 years of experience. She was the first female Director of the Water Resources Agency in Trinidad and Tobago and has led the development of integrated water management plans across the Caribbean. Crichlow has advised organizations like the Organization of American States and UN-ECLAC on climate resilience.



Andrea Crosta is founder and Executive Director of Earth League International. An Italian conservationist and journalist, he has 35+ years of experience combating wildlife trafficking and environmental crime. Crosta co-founded the Wildlife Justice Commission and created WildLeaks, the world's first whistleblower platform for environmental crime.



Wazim Mowla is Associate Director of the Caribbean Initiative at the Atlantic Council's Adrienne Arsht Latin America Center. He oversees research and programs on U.S.–Caribbean relations, including financial inclusion and climate resilience projects. He is also a non-resident scholar at FIU's Jack D. Gordon Institute for Public Policy.



Col. (Ret.) Carlos Flesia is a retired engineer officer of the Argentine Army. He holds a master's in International Relations and extensive training in military strategy. Flesia has over two decades of experience managing defense logistics in extreme environments, including serving as commander of Argentine stations in Antarctica. He directed renewable energy research projects in the field and led the Antarctic training school for the Argentine Army.

Meet our Speakers



Juan Pablo Toro is Executive Director of AthenaLab, a Chilean think tank on international security. He was a journalist for 22 years, serving as international editor of El Mercurio and as a correspondent for the Associated Press in Mexico and Colombia. Toro holds a Master's in Political Science from the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile and received security studies training at universities in the U.K. and Mexico.



Juan Ignacio Cánepa is Academic Secretary of the TAEDA Foundation. He organizes and directs the foundation's research teams and publications, serving as chief editor of DEF magazine and other TAEDA materials. A political scientist and defense analyst, Cánepa holds a degree in Political Science and a postgraduate diploma in Digital Journalism at Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, and was a Fulbright Scholar.



Yanina Kogan is Director of the TAEDA Foundation. She leads the foundation's programs on topics such as connectivity, climate change, and inclusive development. Previously, Kogan directed the Argentine-Israeli Chamber of Commerce and served in Argentina's Foreign Ministry during its pro tempore Mercosur presidency. She holds an M.A. in International Relations from FLACSO/Barcelona and degrees in tech and investment.



Sam McGovern is a portfolio manager at C4ADS (Center for Advanced Defense Studies). He holds a master's in international affairs and natural resources from American University and a B.S. in Biology. McGovern researches maritime and resource security, with a focus on illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing and human trafficking at sea.



Katy Dalton is a marine conservation specialist with Conservation International. As a Program Manager, she focuses on sustainable fisheries and ocean governance, collaborating with governments and industry to combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing. Dalton leads global initiatives on social responsibility in seafood supply chains and ocean health.

Meet our Speakers



Gina Fiore leads the Coalition for Fisheries Transparency and works on fisheries finance at Pew Charitable Trusts. She directs efforts on beneficial ownership and financial transparency in the global seafood industry. Her work addresses the convergence of illegal fishing, organized crime, and maritime security. Previously, Fiore worked as a U.S. Navy consultant and in the defense sector on maritime law enforcement.



Gregg Casad is Senior Compliance Advisor for the Marine Program at WildAid. In this role, he works with enforcement agencies, fishing communities, and NGOs in countries like The Bahamas, Gabon, and Tanzania to build capacity for effective marine law enforcement. Casad helps plan interventions to protect endangered fisheries and trains local partners in sustainable enforcement practices.



Mark Bond, Ph.D., is a marine ecologist and Institute of Environment scholar at Florida International University. His research focuses on sharks and rays in tropical ecosystems. Using underwater video surveys and acoustic telemetry, he studies how marine reserves affect predator populations. Bond earned his Ph.D. in Marine Biology from Stony Brook University. He has conducted fieldwork in Belize, Madagascar, and Fiji, generating data critical to coral reef conservation.

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