

## Iran’s Revolution Turns Forty

Atlantic Council and the University of Southern Florida

Tuesday, February 12, 2019

9:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.

Atlantic Council Headquarters

## Speaker Biographies



### Holly Dages

*Nonresident Fellow, Middle East Security Initiative, Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security, Atlantic Council*

**Holly Dages** is a nonresident fellow with the Middle East Security Initiative at the Atlantic Council’s Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security. She is also the editor of Scowcroft Center’s *IranSource* blog and curator for the weekly newsletter, *The Iranist*. Before joining the Atlantic Council, Holly worked as a freelance Iran analyst, regularly following traditional and social media in English and Persian. She also worked as the assistant editor at the Cairo Review of Global Affairs, associated with the American University in Cairo’s Global Affairs and Public Policy School. Holly received a master’s degree in political

science at the American University in Cairo, and a bachelor’s degree in political science and French from the University of California, Los Angeles. In 2013, she conducted on-the-ground research in Iran on the impact of sanctions for her master’s degree thesis.



### Haleh Esfandiari

*Former and Founding Director, Middle East Program, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars*

**Haleh Esfandiari**, the former and founding director of the Middle East Program at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, is a public policy fellow at the Wilson Center. In her native Iran, she was a journalist, served as deputy secretary general of the Women’s Organization of Iran, and was the deputy director of a cultural foundation where she was responsible for the activities of several museums and art and cultural centers. She taught Persian language at Oxford University and, prior to coming to the Wilson Center, from 1980 to 1994, she taught Persian language, contemporary Persian literature, and courses on the women’s movement in Iran at Princeton University. The author of *My Prison, My Home: One Woman’s Story of*

*Captivity in Iran* (2009) and *Reconstructed Lives: Women and Iran’s Islamic Revolution* (1997), she has written articles and op-eds for a number of outlets including Foreign Policy, Journal of Democracy, Princeton Papers in Near Eastern Studies, New Republic, Wilson Quarterly, Chronicle of Higher Education and Middle East Review. Esfandiari is the first recipient of a yearly award established in her name, the Haleh Esfandiari Award; this award was presented to her by a group of businesswomen and activists from countries across the Middle East and North Africa region.



### **Nazila Fathi**

*Journalist and Author*

**Nazila Fathi** is the former New York Times correspondent based in Tehran and the author of *The Lonely War: One Woman's Account of the Struggle for Modern Iran* (2014). She covered Iran from 1993 to 2010. She won two Harvard fellowships for her coverage of Iran, a Nieman and a Shorenstein, and was an associate at the Harvard Belfer Center. She also translated a book by 2003 human rights Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Shirin Ebadi, *History and Documentation of Human Rights in Iran* (1999), from Persian to English for which she was awarded a human rights fellowship at Lund University in Sweden.



### **Kevan Harris**

*Assistant Professor of Sociology, University of California-Los Angeles*

**Kevan Harris** is assistant professor of sociology at the University of California-Los Angeles. He is the author of *A Social Revolution: Politics and the Welfare State in Iran* (2017). Harris is the lead researcher for the Iran Social Survey, a nationwide survey of social and economic life under the Islamic Republic. Prior to coming to UCLA, Harris was a postdoctoral researcher at Princeton University's Department of Near Eastern Studies. His writings on Iranian politics, economy, and society have appeared in numerous venues such as *Foreign Affairs*, *Foreign Policy*, and *Time*.



### **Colonel (Ret.) Derek J. Harvey**

*Senior Advisor, House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence*

**Derek J. Harvey** currently serves as the senior advisor for the House Permanent Select Committee for Intelligence. Prior to this, he was the special assistant to the President and senior director for the Middle East on the National Security Council for President Donald Trump. Harvey has a broad range of expertise working inter-agency policy formulation, strategic planning, designing analytical studies, and writing estimates and policy papers. As the director of the Global Initiative for Civil Society and Conflict at the University of South Florida, he focused on developing knowledge and insights in a socio-cultural-political context to inform smarter decision-making. During his military career, he served as special advisor to four Multi-National Forces-Iraq and Multi-National Corps-Iraq Commanders, Chief, Commander's Assessments and Initiatives Group and "Red Cell" Team Chief for Combined Joint Task Force-7 and Multi-National Force-Iraq and Chief, Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia Division working Department of the Army and OSD-Policy issues.



### **David Ignatius**

*Columnist, The Washington Post*

**David Ignatius** is associate editor and columnist at The Washington Post. Since 2003, he has been the author of a twice weekly, globally distributed column on global politics, economics and international affairs. Prior to this, Ignatius served as executive editor of the International Herald Tribune and in a variety of positions at The Washington Post including assistant managing editor for business news, foreign editor and editor of Outlook section. Before joining The Post, Ignatius worked at the Wall Street Journal, where he began as a reporter and later was Middle East correspondent and chief diplomatic correspondent. The author of numerous articles for Foreign

Affairs, The New York Times Magazine, Atlantic Monthly and others, Ignatius has also written ten novels, including *Body of Lies* (2007) which was made into a movie starring Leonardo DiCaprio and directed by Ridley Scott. He is a fellow of the Harvard Kennedy School's Belfer Center and has taught as an adjunct lecturer at the Kennedy School.



### **Ambassador (Ret.) John Limbert**

*Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Iran*

**John Limbert** served for 34 years in the US Foreign Service and for 12 years (until June 2018) as Class of 1955 professor of Middle Eastern Studies at the United States Naval Academy. During his time in the Foreign Service, he served mostly in the Middle East and Islamic Africa, including postings in Iran, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Algeria, Guinea, and Sudan. He was ambassador to Mauritania (2000-03) and president of the American Foreign Service Association (2003-05). He also served two tours in Iraq in 2003 and 2004. In 2009-2010, while on leave of absence from the Naval Academy, he served as deputy assistant secretary – responsible for Iranian affairs -- in the State Department's Near East bureau. Before

joining the Foreign Service, he taught in Iran as a Peace Corps volunteer in Kurdistan Province and as an instructor at Shiraz (then Pahlavi) University. He has written numerous articles and books on Middle Eastern subjects including *Iran at War with History* (1987), *Shiraz in the Age of Hafez* (2004), and *Negotiating with Iran: Wrestling the Ghosts of History* (2009). Limbert holds the Department of State's highest award – the Distinguished Service Award – and the department's Award for Valor, which he received in 1981 after 14 months as a hostage in Iran.



### **Adnan Mazarei**

*Non-Resident Senior Fellow, Peterson Institute for International Economics; former Deputy Director, International Monetary Fund*

**Adnan Mazarei** is a non-resident senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics, where he focuses on the Middle East and Central Asia. Prior to this, he had a 25-year career at the International Monetary Fund, culminating in his service from 2011-2018 as deputy director, Middle East and Central Asia Department. Mazarei also served as assistant director of the department and mission chief for Pakistan; as assistant director, Strategy, Policy, and Review Department; advisor to the First Deputy Managing Director; deputy division chief, Middle Eastern Department and as an economist, working on countries including Russia, the Philippines, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan. Before joining

the IMF, Mazarei was a consultant at the World Bank and a research assistant at the UCLA Department of Economics/Gustav von Grunebaum Center for Near Eastern Studies. His publications include: *Four Years after the Spring* (2015, with Tokhir Mirzoev) *Finance & Development* (2015, Vol. 52, No. 2); *Sovereign Wealth Funds and the IMF* (2012, with Udaibir Das and Alison Stuart); *Sovereign Investment, Concerns and Policy Reactions* (2012); and two chapters in *Economics of Sovereign Wealth Funds: Issues for Policymakers* (2010). He is also the author of *The Iranian Economy under the Islamic Republic: Institutional Change and Macroeconomic Performance* (1996), and *Imports Under a Foreign Exchange Constraint: The Case of the Islamic Republic of Iran* (1995).



### **Mohsen Milani**

*Executive Director, Center for Strategic & Diplomatic Studies, University of South Florida*

**Mohsen Milani** is the executive director of the Center for Strategic & Diplomatic Studies, and professor of Politics at the School of Interdisciplinary Global Studies at the University of South Florida. An internationally recognized scholar, he has been a research fellow at Harvard, Oxford, and the Ca' Foscari University in Venice, Italy. He served as chairperson of the Department of Government and International Affairs at the University of South Florida (1999-2012). Milani has authored more than 80 publications. Some of his works have been translated into French, Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Persian and Portuguese. His latest articles include: *The Turbulent*

*History Shaping Iran's Opposition to an Independent Iraqi Kurdistan* (2017); *Iran in a Reconnecting Eurasia* (2016); *How Rafsanjani Became the Pragmatic Voice of Iran's Revolution* (2017); *Iran's Strategy in the Syrian Civil War* (2013), and; the following articles in *Foreign Affairs*: "Iran and Russia's Uncomfortable Alliance;" "How Iran's Moderates Triumphed;" "Saudi Arabia's Desperate Measures;" "Why Tehran Isn't to Blame for the Civil War in Yemen;" "Rouhani's Foreign Policy;" "The Ayatollah's Game Plan;" "Meet me in Baghdad;" and "Iran's US Policy."



### **Vali Nasr**

*Dean, Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies,  
Johns Hopkins University*

**Vali Nasr** is dean and professor of International Politics at Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies. He is a Middle East scholar, foreign policy adviser and commentator on international relations. His most recent book, *The Dispensable Nation: American Foreign Policy in Retreat* (2014), deals with the implications of the Obama administration's foreign policy on American strategic interests. His previous books, *Forces of Fortune: How the Rise of a Muslim Middle Class Can Change Our World* (2009); *The Shia Revival* (2007); and *Democracy in Iran* (2009) examined political change in Iran; the postwar sectarian violence in Iraq and the Arab Spring uprising. He has served as columnist for the New York Times and

Bloomberg View; and has written on Iran and the Middle East for Foreign Affairs, Wall Street Journal, Washington Post and the Atlantic among other publications. Prior to being named dean of Johns Hopkins SAIS, Nasr was a professor of international politics at Tufts University's Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. From 2009 to 2011, he was the special adviser to the President's special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan; he served on the faculties of the Naval Postgraduate School, Stanford University, the University of California, San Diego and the University of San Diego; he was a Carnegie scholar and a senior fellow at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government. He also served as an adjunct senior fellow for Middle Eastern studies at the Council on Foreign Relations and a senior fellow in foreign policy at the Brookings Institution.



### **Natan Sachs**

*Director, Center for Middle East Policy, The Brookings Institution*

**Natan Sachs** is a fellow in and director of the Center for Middle East Policy at Brookings. His work focuses on Israeli foreign policy, domestic politics, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and US-Israeli relations. He is currently writing a book on Israeli grand strategy and its domestic origins. Sachs has taught on the Arab-Israeli conflict at Georgetown University's Department of Government, and research design for the Security Studies Program at Georgetown. Previously, Sachs was a Fulbright fellow in Indonesia, where his research included an empirical study of the behavioral effects of Islamic and national identities. He was subsequently a Hewlett fellow at Stanford's Center on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law.



**Barbara Slavin**

*Director, Future of Iran Initiative, Atlantic Council*

**Barbara Slavin** is the director of the Future of Iran Initiative at the Atlantic Council, an adjunct professor at George Washington University's Elliott School of International Affairs and a columnist for *Al-Monitor.com*, a website devoted to news from and about the Middle East. The author of *Bitter Friends, Bosom Enemies: Iran, the US and the Twisted Path to Confrontation* (2007), she is a regular commentator on US foreign policy and Iran on NPR, PBS, and CSPAN. A career journalist, Slavin previously served as assistant managing editor for world and national security of the *Washington Times*, senior diplomatic reporter for *USA TODAY*, Cairo correspondent for the *Economist*, as an editor at the *New York Times Week in Review*. She has covered such key foreign policy issues as the US-led war on terrorism, policy toward "rogue" states, the Iran-Iraq war, and the Arab-Israeli conflict. She has traveled to Iran nine times. Slavin also served as a public policy scholar at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, where she wrote *Bitter Friends*, and as a senior fellow at the United States Institute of Peace, where she researched and wrote the report *Mullahs, Money and Militias: How Iran Exerts Its Influence in the Middle East*.



**Randa Slim**

*Director, Track II Dialogues Initiative, Middle East Institute; Adjunct Research Fellow, New America Foundation*

**Randa Slim** is a senior fellow and director of Conflict Resolution and Track II Dialogues Program at the Middle East Institute. She is also a non-resident fellow at the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced and International Studies (SAIS) Foreign Policy Institute. A former vice president of the International Institute for Sustained Dialogue, Slim has been a senior program advisor at the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, a guest scholar at the United States Institute of Peace, a program director at Resolve, Inc, and a program officer at the Kettering Foundation. A long-term practitioner of Track II dialogue and peace-building processes in the Middle East and Central Asia, she is the author of several studies, book chapters, and articles on conflict management, post-conflict peace-building, and Middle East politics



### **Mohammad Ayatollahi Tabaar**

*Associate Professor, Bush School of Government and Public Service, Texas A&M University*

**Mohammad Ayatollahi Tabaar** is an associate professor in the International Affairs Department at the Bush School of Government at Texas A&M University. He is also a fellow at Rice University's Baker Institute for Public Policy. His research areas include international security and Middle East politics. He is the author of *Religious Statecraft: The Politics of Islam in Iran* (2018). His articles have appeared in *Security Studies* and *Journal of Strategic Studies*. He has also written for *Foreign Affairs' Snapshot*, *Foreign Policy's Middle East Channel*, and *Washington Post's Monkey Cage*.



### **Ariane M. Tabatabai**

*Associate Political Scientist, RAND Corporation*

**Ariane Tabatabai** is an associate political scientist at the RAND Corporation. She is also a columnist for the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, and a Truman national security fellow. Tabatabai's research interests include: The Middle East, South Asia, terrorism and insurgency, arms control and nonproliferation, personnel and force structure. Prior to joining RAND, she served as the director of curriculum and a visiting assistant professor of security studies at the Georgetown University Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service and an international civilian consultant for NATO. Previously, Tabatabai was a post-doctoral fellow in the International Security Program and a Stanton nuclear security fellow in the International Security Program and the Project on Managing the Atom at the Harvard Kennedy School's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs where she was also an associate. Tabatabai also held positions as a non-resident scholar with the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies at the Monterey Institute; senior associate in the Proliferation Prevention Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), and adjunct senior fellow in the Middle East Program at the Center for A New American Security (CNAS). She is the co-author of *Triple Axis: Iran's Relations with Russia and China* (2018) and has published widely in academic, policy, and mainstream outlets, including *International Security*, the *Journal of Strategic Studies*, the *New York Times*, the *Atlantic*, *Foreign Affairs*, and *Foreign Policy*.



**Sara Vakhshouri**

*Founder and President, SVB Energy International*

**Sara Vakhshouri** is founder and president of SVB Energy International, a strategic energy consulting firm with offices in Washington DC and Dubai. Vakhshouri has extensive experience in global energy market studies, energy security and geopolitical risk, and has consulted numerous public and private sector energy and policy leaders. She has worked in both public and private sectors of the Iranian energy industry, in 2004-5 as advisor to the director of the National Iranian Oil Company International (NIOCI), the division responsible for marketing and sale of Iranian crude oil and production. She also worked as an energy investment analyst at the Oil Pension Fund Investment Company and Pasargad Energy Investment

Company. Based in Washington since 2009, she has advised the US government, investment banks, financial institutions, law firms and international corporations on the energy market, geopolitics of energy, and investment patterns. She is the author of *The Marketing and Sale of Iranian Export Crude Oil since the Islamic Revolution* (2011).