

The Future of US-Iraq Relations

IRAQ INITIATIVE

Wednesday, April 29, 2020

10:30 – 11:30 a.m. EDT

Virtual event via Zoom

Speaker Bios



Ms. Kirsten Fontenrose

Director, Scowcroft Middle East Security Initiative, Atlantic Council

Kirsten Fontenrose is Director of the Scowcroft Middle East Security Initiative at the Atlantic Council where she leads the security pillar within the Middle East programs. This effort focuses on the Middle East and North Africa's ongoing security challenges, geopolitical competition, and the transatlantic community's role in promoting security and stability to allow for political and economic development. Kirsten has twenty years of experience working with the national security apparatuses of nations in the Middle East and Africa from positions within the US Department of Defense, Department of State, White House, private industry, and non-profit sector. She served as Senior Director for Gulf Affairs at the National Security Council, leading the development of US policy toward nations of the Gulf Cooperation Council, Yemen, Egypt, and Jordan. Most recently, she was Senior Vice President for Global Relations at the Sonoran Policy Group. Previously, Kirsten led the Middle East and Africa team in the interagency Global Engagement Center, built relationships with military officers and diplomats from the Middle East and South Asia for the Near East Center for Strategic Studies at the National Defense University, which she helped establish. Her career began in the non-profit sector at the National Council on US-Arab Relations, and in the private sector working on US-Arab business projects with Arthur Houghton Associates. She holds a BA in Middle East Studies from the College of William and Mary, an MA in Middle East Studies from Indiana University and an MBA from Harvard Business School.



Dr. Abbas Kadhim

Director, Iraq Initiative, Atlantic Council

Abbas Kadhim leads the Atlantic Council Iraq Initiative. He is an Iraq expert and author of *Reclaiming Iraq: The 1920 Revolution and the Founding of the Modern State*. Most recently, he was a senior foreign policy fellow at Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies. He was formerly an assistant professor of national security affairs and Middle East studies at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California and a visiting assistant professor at Stanford University. He also previously held a senior government affairs position at the Iraqi Embassy in Washington, DC. His books include *Governance in the Middle East and North Africa* and *The Hawza Under Siege: Studies in the Ba'th Party Archive*. He earned a PhD in Near Eastern Studies from the University of California, Berkeley.

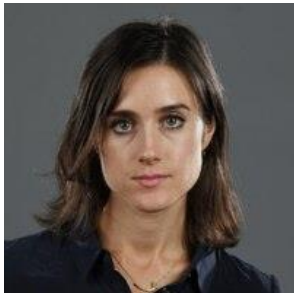


Dr. C. Anthony Pfaff

Nonresident Senior Fellow, Atlantic Council

Dr. Tony Pfaff is currently a nonresident senior fellow with the Atlantic Council's Iraq Initiative and the research professor for the Military Profession and Ethic at the Strategic Studies Institute (SSI), U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA. A retired Army colonel and Foreign Area Officer (FAO) for the Middle East and North Africa, Dr. Pfaff recently served as Director for Iraq on the National Security Council Staff. His last active duty posting was Senior Army and Military Advisor to the State Department from 2013-2016, where he served on the Policy Planning Staff advising on cyber, regional military affairs, the Arab Gulf Region, Iran, and security sector assistance reform. Prior to taking the State Department position, he served as the Defense Attaché in Baghdad, the Chief of International Military Affairs for US Army Central Command, and as the Defense Attaché in Kuwait. He served twice in Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, once as the Deputy J2 for a Joint Special Operations Task Force and as the Senior Military Advisor for the Civilian Police Assistance Training Team. He also served as the Senior Intelligence Officer on the Iraq Intelligence Working Group and as a UN observer along the Iraq-Kuwait border. Prior to becoming a FAO, Dr. Pfaff served on the faculty at West Point as an assistant professor of Philosophy. As a company grade Army officer, he deployed to Operation DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM with 82nd Airborne Division and participated in Operation ABLE SENTRY with the 1st Armored Division. Dr. Pfaff has a bachelor's degree in philosophy and economics from Washington and Lee University, where he graduated cum laude with honors in philosophy; a master's degree in philosophy from Stanford University, with a concentration in the history and philosophy of science and where received a graduate fellowship at the Center for Conflict and Negotiation; a master's in national resource management from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, where he was a distinguished graduate; and a doctorate in philosophy from Georgetown University.

Moderator Bio



Ms. Louisa Loveluck

Baghdad Bureau Chief, Washington Post

Louisa Loveluck is the *Washington Post's* Baghdad bureau chief. She joined the Post as the 2016 Laurence Stern Fellow, and later covered the war in Syria from her base in Beirut. Before that, she was the Daily Telegraph's Cairo correspondent, reporting on the 2013 military coup and deadly crackdown that followed. She graduated from the University of Cambridge in 2011, where she read Social and Political Sciences.

Introduced By



Mr. William F. Wechsler

Director, Rafik Hariri Center & Middle East Programs, Atlantic Council

William F. Wechsler is Director of the Rafik Hariri Center and Middle East Programs at the Atlantic Council. Mr. Wechsler's most recent government position was Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Combatting Terrorism. He advised multiple Secretaries and helped coordinate interagency policies on a wide range of direct and indirect actions. His portfolio included the Department's policies, plans, authorities and resources related to special operations and irregular warfare, with an emphasis on counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, information operations and other sensitive operations. He also helped provide civilian oversight for the service-like responsibilities of the United States Special Operations Command. Previously Mr. Wechsler served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Counternarcotics and Global Threats, where he directed a budget of \$1.6 billion and oversaw military and civilian programs around the globe. His key areas of focus included integrating law enforcement operations into our military campaigns in Afghanistan and institutionalizing military counter threat finance structures and doctrine. During the Clinton Administration Mr. Wechsler served as Special Advisor to the Secretary of the Treasury, where he helped establish the legal regime and policies we use to impose foreign sanctions and combat money laundering. He had previously served as Director for Transnational Threats on the National Security Council staff, and prior to that was a Special Assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Mr. Wechsler is currently also President of the Center on Illicit Networks and Transnational Organized Crime and the Treasurer of the American Historical Association. He was previously a Senior Fellow at the Middle East Institute and a Senior Fellow at the Center for American Progress. Mr. Wechsler has also had a separate career in finance. He has been Vice Chairman of Capitol Peak Asset Management and Managing Director of Greenwich Associates. He is a CFA charter holder and also holds the Series 7 and Series 63 securities licenses. Mr. Wechsler is a graduate of Cornell University and received a master's degree from Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs. He has been an adjunct lecturer at SIPA and is currently an executive committee member of the SIPA alumni association. He has contributed chapters to two edited volumes and has been published in the New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Foreign Affairs, and the National Interest, among others.