EXTRA HEMISPHERIC INFLUENCES IN LATIN AMERICA

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THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR LATIN AMERICAN ISSUES
AND THE
US ARMY WAR COLLEGE STRATEGIC STUDIES INSTITUTE

Speaker Biographies

Douglas Farah

Douglas Farah is an adjunct fellow of the Americas Program at CSIS and a senior fellow at the International Assessment and Strategy Center. He is an expert on transnational criminal organizations, insurgencies, ungoverned spaces, illicit money flows, and resource exploitation in Latin America. In recent years, he has written extensively about Iran's growing influence in Latin America, the Bolivarian revolution, and transnational criminal and terrorist networks in the region. He has also worked as a consultant with the World Bank, the Rand Corporation, the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, and other organizations. He is a frequent lecturer to the U.S. military institutions on the FARC and other Latin American insurgencies, and he has testified before Congress on numerous occasions. Mr. Farah is the author of two books: Blood from Stones: The Secret Financial Network of Terror (Broadway, 2004) and Merchant of Death: Money, Guns, Planes and the Man Who Makes War Possible (Wiley, 2007).

Dr. Cynthia Watson

Dr. Cynthia Watson currently serves as Professor of Strategy at The National War College, The National Defense University. Dr. Watson grew up in Thailand and Colombia and earned a M.A. in Economic History/Latin American Studies from the London School of Economics and a PhD in Government & International Studies from the University of Notre Dame. She has published nine books on various security issues, including Combatant Commands: Origins, Structure and
Engagements (2011) and Military Education (2007). Her current work focuses on military education as an instrument of statecraft as well as China’s modernizing and how that affects its security relations. Dr. Watson is a member of the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations and of the International Institute for Strategic Studies. She currently serves on the Editorial Board of Third World Quarterly, and is Spanish-certified for Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic.

Antonio José De La Cruz

Mr. Antonio José De La Cruz has more than two decades of experience in the Venezuelan energy and political process and Inter-American relations. He has served in senior positions in the Petroleum Oil Company (PDVSA). He has been President and CEO of different companies in the oil, finance and healthcare sector. He is also an associate of VisionAmericas LLC (2012), a consulting firm in Washington DC, where he provides expert analysis of Latin America’s economic, security, and political context. He is the President, founder and CEO (2002 to today) of ICS Group SA. He has spoken on Venezuelan issues and has written about PDVSA’s actual business model, as well as future scenarios after Chavez’ reelection last October, the security for the region and his nexus with Iran, China, Hezbollah and Russia among others.