

Good Afternoon,

Thanks to all who have made this event possible; Dr. I, the AU and CGSC staffs and especially the panel members.

And for those who have taken the time to attend in person or on line to learn and benefit from this great program, thanks for being here, this event is for you.

My trip to Beijing in NOV/DEC of 1997...

In the first paragraph of The Interim National Security Strategy Guidance issued by the Biden administration in March of 2021 a, “... growing rivalry with China, Russia and other authoritarian states...” is listed as one of the many “unprecedented challenges” of our time. China and Russia challenge our national security interests in different regions of the world and China is specifically referred by our senior leaders as the “pacing threat,” and a “systemic challenge” to our global interests, starting in the INDOPACOM region.

Proof of this is not hard to find. Last Sunday 27 PLA aircraft entered Taiwan’s ADIZ. This is nothing new, with 150 incursions over a 4 day period earlier this year.

Also this week the President of Ukraine announced he uncovered a planned coup for Wednesday or Thursday while Russia has massed over 90,000 troops on its border...

Today's panel could not be more timely...

Responding to these profound national security challenges, today, we at the Army University and U.S. Army Command and General Staff College continue our series of discussions with a focus on the INDOPACOM Theater of operations.

Today's panel is sponsored by U.S. Army Cultural and Area Studies Office (CASO) of the Command and General Staff College (CGSC). This is the second panel for this academic year, addressing strategic challenges which China and Russia are posing for the U.S. and our allies in the region.

More specifically, and very appropriate given current events, the topic of our CASO panel today is: “Understanding INDOPACOM’s Geopolitical and Military Environment: Where Sino, Russian, and American Interests Collide.”

Today's session includes four panel members:

- **Dr. Joseph G. Babb, Department of Military History, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College (CGSC).**
- **LTC Holly Y. Maness, Department of Joint, Interagency and Multinational Operations, CGSC.**
- **LTC David C. Mccaughrin, Department of Joint, Interagency and Multinational Operations, CGSC.**
- **Major Frederik Wintermans, Royal Netherlands Army, CGSC.**

The complete bios of the panel members can be accessed at the CASO website, and you will see that they all bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to this discussion.

Our Moderator today is Dr. Mahir J. Ibrahimov (Dr. I.), Director of the Cultural and Area Studies Office (CASO), U.S. Army Command and General Staff College.

Without further ado I would like to turn the floor over to Dr. Ibrahimov, who will continue moderating throughout the session.

Educate to Win!

Thank you!