



AFRICA CENTER FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR COUNTERING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME

BIOGRAPHIES

Session 3: Understanding Vulnerabilities: Violence, State Legitimacy, and Livelihood Challenges

Panelists

Dr. Peter Biar Ajak is a Visiting Fellow at the Africa Center. He supports the Africa Center's Emerging Leaders academic programs and advises on engaging the rising generation of African security sector leaders across the Africa Center's activities. He also contributes to the Africa Center's academic programming and research on national security strategy development and managing security resources and advises on megatrends shaping the African security landscape in 2030.

Prior to joining the Africa Center, Dr. Ajak served as a political economy analyst for UNICEF, the co-country director and senior advisor in South Sudan for the International Growth Centre, and the in-country economist for the World Bank and Coordinator of Policy and Strategy in the Office of the Minister of National Security in the Office of the President of South Sudan. Additionally, Dr. Ajak founded the Juba-based Center for Strategic Analyses and Research and South Sudan Wrestling Entertainment, a private company that uses the indigenous sport of wrestling to promote peace and reconciliation among the tribes of South Sudan.

In addition to being an Africa Center alumnus, Dr. Ajak received a B.A. in economics from LaSalle University and a Master of Public Administration in international development from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, where he was also a Public Service Fellow. He earned his PhD in Politics and International Studies from the University of Cambridge, Trinity College.

Ms. Laurence Aïda Ammour is an Algerian/French sociologist and analyst in international security and defense affairs. She was formerly an international staff member at the NATO Defense College's Research Division in Rome from 2000-2008. Her research fields are organized crime, transnational threats, terrorism, social change and conflicts, counterterrorism (CVE) and deradicalization, which she studies in Northwest Africa and the Sahara-Sahel region. She has collaborated with ACSS as adjunct faculty and discussion group facilitator since 2011.

Select collaborations both as a speaker and author include: In-On-Africa (Johannesburg), IHS Jane's (London), U.S. State Department, Centre for Naval Analysis (Alexandria), Trustafrica (Dakar), Institut Européen de la Méditerranée (IEMED-Barcelona), The International Institute for Security Studies-London (The Military Balance), Nordiska Afrikainstitutet (Stockholm), USARAF (Vicenza, Italy), The Institut Français des Relations Internationales (Paris), and The Universities of Valencia and Madrid (Spain).

Recent publications include, *The Death of Abubakr al-Baghdadi, not a good news for Africa*, CF2R, Paris, November 2019; *The Wahhabi Penetration In Africa*, CF2R, Paris, 2018; *Libya View of Algeria*, Limes Review, Milano (Italy), July 2019; *Algeria, An Emerging Power In Regional Conflict Resolution Initiatives*, University of Bogota, African Studies Department, Colombia, 2019; and "The Algerian Counter-Terrorism Strategy: Between Internal Security Imperatives and the Search for Regional Stability," African Conflict Studies Department, Ottawa University, Canada, 2019.

Moderator

Dr. Catherine Lena Kelly is an assistant professor responsible for overseeing the Africa Center's portfolio on justice, rule of law, and governance and integrating these considerations into academic programming, research, and outreach. Her work focuses on citizen security, party politics and democratization, the rule of law and stabilization, and transnational organized crime.

Prior to joining the Africa Center, Dr. Kelly was an advisor at the American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative and collaborated with teams in Burundi, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali, Mauritania, and Somaliland. As a postdoctoral fellow at Washington University in St. Louis, she designed and taught courses on contemporary Africa and democracy, and at the State Department's Foreign Service Institute, Dr. Kelly taught the West Africa course and co-taught the governance and religion modules in the Area Studies course. She has been awarded numerous fellowships and grants, including a Mellon/ American Council of Learned Societies Public Fellowship, a West Africa Research Association grant, and two U.S. Department of Education Foreign Language and Area Studies fellowship for the Wolof language and doctoral research in Senegal. Her work has been published extensively in policy and academic journals.

Dr. Kelly holds a Ph.D. and M.A. in government from Harvard University, a Graduate Certificate in international politics (Europe, conflict resolution, and peacebuilding) from the Université Libre de Bruxelles, and a B.A. summa cum laude from Washington University in St. Louis.