



AFRICA CENTER FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES

FORCE COMMANDERS ROUNDTABLE

BIOGRAPHIES

Leadership

Ms. Amanda Dory is the Director of the Africa Center for Strategic Studies, located at the National Defense University in Washington, DC. Prior to this appointment, she held the position of Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Indo-Pacific Security Affairs. Ms. Dory is a career member of the Senior Executive Service.

Ms. Dory has served in multiple leadership roles in the Office of the Secretary of Defense for Policy, including Acting Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for African Affairs, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy, and acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Plans and Posture. She also served on the National War College faculty and as associate dean for outreach.

She is an alumna of Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service and received a master's degree with concentrations in international economics and African studies from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. She is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

As Academic Dean, **Dr. Assis Malaquias** oversees curriculum and program development at the Africa Center. This includes lines of effort in Advancing Military Professionalism; Countering Transnational Organized Crime; Countering Violent Extremism and Countering Terrorism; Cyber Domain Awareness, Cybersecurity, and Information/Disinformation; Maritime Safety and Security; National Security Strategy Development; Peace Support Operations and Crisis Response; and Rule of Law and Security Sector Governance.

Prior to joining the Africa Center, Dr. Malaquias served as Professor and Chair in the Department of Global Studies and Maritime Affairs at the California State University Maritime Academy. Dr. Malaquias' previous positions include: Professor and Chair of Defense Economics and Resource Management at the Africa Center for Strategic Studies; Associate Dean of International and Intercultural Studies and Professor of Government at St. Lawrence University; Extraordinary Associate Professor of Political Studies at the University of Western Cape in South Africa; and a Visiting Professor at Stellenbosch University in South Africa.

Dr. Malaquias holds an M.A. in economics and a Ph.D. in Political Science from Dalhousie University, Canada.

Dr. Nate Allen is Associate Professor at the Africa Center for Strategic Studies, where oversees academic programming and conducts research on cyber issues, peace operations, emerging technology, and civil-military across Africa. Previously, Dr. Allen was a policy advisor at the U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP) Task Force on Extremism in Fragile States. He has also worked at the U.S. State Department, House of Representatives, and as a research analyst at NORC at the University of Chicago. Dr. Allen's work has appeared in a wide range of leading policy and peer-reviewed publications, including *Armed Forces and Society*, *The Washington Quarterly*, *Democratization*, *Orbis*, *War on the Rocks*, *The Washington Post*, and *Foreign Affairs*. He has received fellowships from American University, the Robertson Family Foundation, and USIP, where he was a 2016-2017 Peace Scholar. He currently serves as a Research Fellow at South Africa's Stellenbosch University and is a Council on Foreign Relations Term Member.

Dr. Allen holds a Ph.D. in international relations and African studies from the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies, an M.A. from Princeton University's School of Public and International Affairs, and a B.A. from Swarthmore College.

Panelists

Martin Luther Agwai CFR FSS MSS DSS fwc is a retired Nigerian military general. During his distinguished career, Agwai held several positions at tactical, operational, and strategic levels both in Nigeria and abroad, culminating in his promotion to four-star rank and appointment as Chief of Defense Staff (CDS) of Nigeria in June 2006. He is currently a Visiting Professor to African Leadership Centre, King's College, London, United Kingdom and the Chairman of Leadway Assurance Company Limited, a leading insurance company in Nigeria.

General Agwai's past positions include Nigerian Defense Adviser covering the entire Southern African Sub-region stationed at Harare, Zimbabwe 1993-1996. He also served as Deputy Force Commander of United Nations (UN) Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) 2000-2002, where he introduced the 'Hot Spot' disarmament that assisted the Mission greatly during the Disarmament, Demobilization and Re-integration (DD&R). He was Deputy Military Adviser at the UN Headquarters in New York, Nigerian Chief of Army Staff (COAS) in 2003 where he began the program for the Transformation of the Army, and CDS in 2006. He was the last Force Commander (FC) of the African Union (AU) Mission in Sudan (AMIS) and the first FC of the AU/UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) the largest peacekeeping force in December, 2007. In 2018, he carried out an independent review of United Nations Organization Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) that led to the Mission reorganization by the UN.

The General holds a Post Graduate Diploma in Public Administration with distinction from the Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON) and M.Sc. in National Resource Strategy from the National Defense University (NDU) in Washington DC, USA. He is the recipient of several military, academic, professional local and international awards and recognitions including the prestigious Nigerian National Award and Visionary Award from the Africa Center for Strategic Studies in 2010. In recognition of his contribution to international peacekeeping and

peacebuilding, the Martin Luther Agwai International Leadership and Peacekeeping Centre in Nigeria was renamed after him.

Major General Oumar Bikimo has contributed significantly to peacekeeping and military operations in the Sahel and Central Africa. His career spans key positions within the Chadian Military and Defense Ministry, and he has played important roles in multilateral operations including Commander of the G5 Sahel Joint Force (2019-2021) and Deputy Commander of the MINUSMA Force in Mali. Bikimo has received numerous distinctions, including the Commander in the National Order of Chad and the Knight of the Legion of Honor of the French Republic. He is proficient in French, English, Arabic, and Gorane. He has undergone various professional training programs, including defense strategy in Monterrey, California and peacekeeping courses in Ghana. He holds a master's degree in management with a focus on finance and accounting from the Higher Institute of Management in Ndjamena.

The Honorable Josh Black is Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Multilateral Affairs on the National Security Council (NSC) staff at the White House. In this role, he advises the President on a broad range of multilateral issues and leads the White House team responsible for our engagement at the United Nations and other international organizations, global criminal justice, and refugee/migration policy.

In the first two years of the Biden-Harris Administration, Mr. Black served as Senior Policy Advisor to the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Linda Thomas-Greenfield. Based in the ambassador's Washington office, he supported Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield in her role as a member of President Biden's Cabinet and advised her on policies related to the United Nations, sanctions policy, and European affairs, including the war in Ukraine. From 2017-2020, Mr. Black worked in the private sector on global health issues.

During the Obama-Biden Administration, he was the Director for UN and Multilateral Affairs on the National Security Council staff at the White House in 2016-2017. In this capacity, he supported inter-agency policymaking related to the United Nations, including UN peacekeeping, UN Security Council engagement, and the UN Human Rights Council, as well as served as the White House lead on international LGBTI rights issues. From 2008 to 2016, Mr. Black worked on a range of national security issues at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations, where he led the Mission's sanctions and counterterrorism team. Mr. Black was the lead U.S. negotiator on major UN Security Council resolutions on the Iranian and North Korean nuclear threats, the 2011 conflict in Libya, the civil war in South Sudan, and the ISIS terrorist threat. In 2015, he served on the U.S. negotiating team for the Iran nuclear talks, with lead responsibility for the UN-related aspects of the Iran nuclear deal.

Prior to working on multilateral affairs, Mr. Black was the State Department's coordinator for U.S. participation in the Kosovo Future Status Process (2006-2008) and served in a number of State Department positions related to the former Yugoslavia. He joined the State Department as a Presidential Management Fellow (2000-2002), and later worked as a foreign policy fellow in the U.S. Congress (Office of Senator Edward Kennedy) and served twice overseas at the U.S. diplomatic mission in Pristina, Kosovo. Josh holds a Bachelor's degree from Ohio State University

(Spanish and Political Science) and a Master's in Public Affairs from the School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University.

General Birame Diop is a Military Advisor in the Department of Peace Operations at the United Nations. He was appointed to this role by United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres announced on 25 May 2021. General Diop has over 30 years of military experience, previously serving as the Chief of Defense Staff of the Senegalese Armed Forces. Prior to this appointment, he served as the National Security Advisor to the President of Senegal. General Diop was also the Chief of Staff and the Deputy Chief of Staff of the Senegalese Air Force. As a pilot in the Senegalese Air Force, he has accumulated a total of 7,000 flying hours.

General Diop has studied at the Royal Air Academy of Morocco, the University of Southern California, the Air University of Alabama and the College Inter Armées of Paris. General Diop is a scholar and a practitioner who has worked for many years with the Africa Center for Strategic Studies (ACSS), as a facilitator and speaker in a wide range of seminars. He was a fellow at the National Endowment for Democracy and at the Woodrow Wilson Center where he conducted research on Sub-Saharan Africa's Security Sector Reform. General Diop has published several articles on Strategic Airlift Capacities, Security Sector Reform, Civil and Security Sector Relations in Sub-Saharan Africa and National Security and Right to Information (NSRI). He is a doctoral student in Diplomacy and International Relations at the Center for Diplomatic and Strategic Studies in Dakar, Senegal.

General Diop has invented a local approach to border security management, based on the local population. He has also worked with the US Africa Command and ACSS to create a network of African National Security Advisors of all 15-member States of ECOWAS. Additionally, he has facilitated the development of National Security Strategies in Africa through the support of US AFRICOM and the ACSS. He has also worked extensively on the Gender Dimension on Security Reform in Africa. Finally, Gen Diop has done a lot of work in the professionalization of Africa Militaries.

Major General Kenneth P. Ekman is the Director, Strategy, Engagement and Programs, U.S. Africa Command, Stuttgart Möhringen, Germany. In this capacity, he contributes to U.S. policy and strategy, develops theater campaign, operational and force posture plans, integrates international and African partner military efforts and conducts U.S. inter-agency and international engagements consistent with U.S. Africa Command priorities.

Ekman received his commission in 1991 after graduating from the U.S. Air Force Academy. He has primarily flown sailplanes, the F-16 Fighting Falcon and the F-22 Raptor, and has commanded at the squadron, wing and Air Expeditionary Task Force levels. His staff assignments include service at U.S. Air Forces Central Command, Office of the Secretary of Defense, North American Aerospace Defense and U.S. Northern Commands and Office of the Defense Representative Pakistan. Prior to his current position, the general served as Deputy Commander for Operations, Combined Joint Task Force-Operation Inherent Resolve and Commander, 9th Air Expeditionary Task Force-Levant.

Ekman is a command pilot with more than 3,100 flying hours, including 605 combat hours in operations Southern Watch, Northern Watch, Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. He holds a bachelor's of science in aeronautical engineering from the U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs and a master's of science in mechanical engineering from California State University, Fresno.

Lieutenant General (Ret.) Dr. Dennis Gyllensporre is an Associate Professor in Security Policy and Strategy at the Swedish Defense University, currently at Oxford University as a Visiting Fellow. His research is focused on security strategy, military diplomacy, and peacekeeping. He also holds office as the Vice President of the Royal Swedish Academy of War Sciences. LTG (Ret.) Gyllensporre has 38 years of service in the Swedish Armed Forces.

In October 2021, he completed three years of service as the Force Commander for the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). He came from a four-year appointment as the Chief of Defense Staff and Director of Special Forces of the Swedish Armed Forces. He was promoted to Lieutenant General in 2014. Gyllensporre has served as a staff officer in various positions, including tours abroad in Bosnia- Herzegovina and Sudan, and served as a military advisor in international crisis management at the MoD. He has also served as chief of staff at the Swedish Joint Operations Command and later as head of the Doctrine and Concepts Branch at the European Union Military Staff. In 2008, he was deployed to Afghanistan as the Chief of Staff at Regional Command North of the NATO-led operation (ISAF).

He has studied at multifold military institutions and holds several academic degrees, including a Master of Science in Computer Science (Royal National Institute of Technology, Sweden), Master of Business Administration (Warwick University, United Kingdom), Master of Military Arts and Science (US Army Command and General Staff College), as well as a Ph.D. in Policy Analysis and Governance (Maastricht University, the Netherlands). He is the author of several books and academic articles on military strategy and security studies.

His leadership has been officially recognized nationally and internationally. He is a recipient of the Swedish Armed Forces Medal of Merit in gold for distinguished leadership during combat and war-like situations, the French Ordre national de la Légion d'honneur, the Chevalier de l'Ordre national du Mali, and the Dwight D. Eisenhower Award (2001) for academic achievements at U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. He was awarded the 'Leader of Change 2022' in Sweden for successful work as an adaptation manager. Gyllensporre was inaugurated into the Hall of Fame at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College (2017) and the U.S. National Defense University (2022).

Ms. Melanie Harris Higgins is currently serving as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, covering portfolios that include U.S. policy engagement in southern Africa as well as regional peace and security programs across sub-Saharan Africa. She is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, who recently completed an assignment as the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Burundi from 2021-2023. From 2018-2020, she was the Director of the Office of Central African Affairs (AF/C). She previously served as Principal Officer and Consul General at the U.S. Consulate-General in Auckland, New Zealand and Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. Amb. Higgins has

also served in the U.S. Embassies in Indonesia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Australia, and Cameroon, and has worked in the State Department's Operations Center, as Acting Public Affairs Advisor in the East Asian and Pacific Affairs Bureau, and as the Thailand Desk Officer. Amb. Higgins joined the Foreign Service in 1998 and is married to a Diplomatic Security Special Agent. She speaks Indonesian and French, attended Johns Hopkins University, and received an M.A. from the Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS).

Major General Abdul Khalifah (AK) Ibrahim is a distinguished Nigerian military leader who served as Force Commander of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) in the Lake Chad Basin between 2021 and 2023.

General Ibrahim attended the Nigerian Defense Academy Kaduna as a member of the 39 Regular Course and commissioned into the rank of Second Lieutenant in the Nigerian Army in 1992. His career includes various key appointments and deployments, showcasing his leadership in operations such as Economic Community Monitoring Group in Liberia and United Nations Missions in Liberia and South Sudan. Notably, as the Force Commander of the Multinational Joint Task Force in N'Djamena, Chad, he orchestrated successful operations, neutralizing terrorists, facilitating IDP returns, and restoring stability to various regions.

General Ibrahim's contributions earned him numerous honors. In May 2023, the President of the Republic of Chad conferred the national honor of the National Order of Chad on him in recognition of his achievements. He is equally a proud recipient and conferred with the honor of the Officer of the Order of the Federal Republic (OFR). He holds a Bachelor of Science Honors (History) degree from the Nigerian Defense Academy and a Master's in Strategic Studies from the University of Ibadan, Oyo State.

Lieutenant General (Ret.) Balla Keita is a Senegalese military officer who has held a series of key appointments in support of international peacekeeping efforts, such as Force Commander for MINUSCA and Deputy Force Commander for UNAMID. Keita also held crucial positions within the Senegalese Armed Forces, including Inspector General, Army Chief of Staff, and Director of Information and Public Relations. He has participated in peacekeeping missions in Congo, Sudan, and the Central African Republic, and peace enforcement efforts in Liberia and Bissau-Guinea. A seasoned tactician, Keita honed his skills through a diverse array of educational pursuits, graduating from institutions such as the École Militaire Interarmes of France, the United States Army Command and General Staff College in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and the Command and General Staff Academy of the German Armed Forces in Hamburg. His dedication to international security is further underscored by his alumni status at the Geneva Center for Security Policy (GCSP).

Ms. Karin Landgren joined the Security Council Report in May 2018 as its Executive Director. Ms. Landgren served with the United Nations for over 35 years and is the first woman to have headed three UN peace operations mandated by the Security Council. She was until 2015 a UN Under-Secretary-General and head of the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), a peacekeeping operation, and led UNMIL's response to Ebola through the height of the epidemic. Prior to this, she led two political missions, the UN Office in Burundi (BNUB) and the UN Mission in Nepal (UNMIN). She was UNICEF's first chief of child protection in 1998- 2008. While with UNHCR

from 1980 to 1998, Ms. Landgren served in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Eritrea, Singapore, the Philippines, India, and at its headquarters in Geneva. She is a founding member of the Nordic Women Mediators' Network and has taught at Columbia University and Central European University.

Lieutenant General (Ret.) Derrick Mbuyiselo Mgwebi has more than 35 years of national and international military experience. He held several positions in the South African National Defense Force. He also served in the African Union and United Nations Missions within the African continent.

General Mgwebi served as the General Officer Commanding Joint Operational Headquarters from 2003 to 2004. He was then appointed the Force Commander of the African Union Mission in Burundi (AMIB FC), after which he became the United Nations Operation in Burundi Force Commander (ONUB FC) from 2004 to 2006. On completion of his assignment in Burundi, he served as Chief of Human Resources of the South African National Defense Force from 2007 to 2011. From 2011 to 2015, he was appointed Chief of Joint Operations (CJ Ops) of the South African National Defense Force. Subsequently in 2015, he was designated as the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo Force Commander (MONUSCO FC), but only started serving from 2016 to 2018. Following his appointment in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mgwebi retired from official military duties. He was then appointed as the Acting Director General Military Veterans Affairs in the Republic of South Africa from 2018 to 2020.

He holds a diploma in Defense Management from the University of Witwatersrand, together with a certificate in International Business Communications and a degree in Business Administration from the University of South Africa.

Professor Mpho Molomo is the Head of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM) and the Special Representative to the Chair of the Organ (SACO) on Politics Defense and Security Cooperation. As Head of Mission, he provides overall political authority and strategic direction to SAMIM, works closely with the Force Commander, and serves as a link between SAMIM, SADC Secretariat, and the Chairperson of the Organ. Following his appointment as SRCO, Molomo was also appointed Ambassador by His Excellency Dr. Mokgweetsi Eric Masisi, President of the Republic of Botswana.

Before he was seconded to the SADC Mission in Mozambique, Prof. Molomo was Secretary of Political Affairs at the Office of the President in Botswana and previously served as Professor of Political Science in the Department of Political and Administrative Studies at the University of Botswana.

Molomo founded the Center for Strategic Studies in 2001 and established the Regional Center for Culture and Peace Studies at the University of Botswana in 2004.

Molomo holds a doctorate degree in political science from Boston University, master's in political science and Africa studies from Ohio University, and bachelor's from the University of Botswana and Swaziland. Molomo is an alumnus of the Africa Center for Strategic Studies.

Major General Diomède Ndegeya is an experienced senior diplomat and high-level military commander with a number of positions in the Burundi government and multi-lateral organizations (AMISOM/ATMIS). Between 2020 and 2021, he was the Force Commander for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) (now African Union Mission in Somalia (ATMIS)).

In March 2023, he was reappointed as Senior Advisor to the Minister of Defense in Burundi, a position he previously occupied from May 2018 to July 2020. In that capacity, he acts as the Minister's main focal point for the reintegration of former combatants into the Armed Forces; the coordination of DDR and security sector reform programs; and the delivery of defense policy and strategy to all Burundi Defense Attachés globally. He previously served as the, Burundi Defense Attaché to Burundi Embassy to Cairo, and Deputy of Burundian National Defense Force Chief, following his ascension within the National Burundian Army. Ndegeya has a full military education, starting with the artillery Institute in Russia, to the highest military studies of command and defense strategy at the Chinese Defense University and at the National High Institute of Defense Studies in Paris, IHEDN, France. He holds a master's degree in Technical Sciences, as well as two Bachelor's degrees in Economics and Management Sciences and International Relations and Political Sciences. He has navigated many multicultural contexts, taking advantage of his language skills (Swahili, Kirundi, French, English, and Russian).

Brigadier General Magatte Ndiaye is a distinguished Senegalese military leader. Since August 1, 2023, Ndiaye has served as Inspector of Arms and Operations at the General Inspection of the Senegalese Armed Forces. Between 2017 and 2018, he was the Force Commander of the ECOWAS Intervention in the Gambia (ECOMIG). His extensive campaigns also include service in Guinea Bissau, Burundi, Darfur, and Mali, showcasing his commitment to peacekeeping and operational success. He has received numerous accolades, including the Order of the Lion of the Republic of Senegal and the UN Medals for ONUB, UNAMID, MINUSMA, and MINUSCA. Fluent in Wolof, French, English, German, and Spanish, he graduated from West Point in 1990, undertaking subsequent military education and specialized courses.

Dr. Jide Okeke is currently the Coordinator of the Regional Program for Africa at the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). In this role, he oversees the implementation of 42 regional projects in Sub-Saharan Africa, with a cumulative budget of over \$100 million.

He was previously a Senior Adviser on Preventing Violent Extremism at the UNDP Oslo Governance Centre in Norway. He was also the Head of Policy Development on Peace Support Operations at the African Union Peace and Security Department supporting the planning, deployment, management, and liquidation of Africa-led, and AU-mandated peace support operations in Central African Republic, Mali, Somalia, and the Multinational Joint Taskforce against Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin region. Beyond practice, he has worked in various research capacities for notable think tanks such as the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, and the Institute for Security Studies. He has written extensively on governance, peace and security in Africa. He recently led a seminal UNDP Research report on the resurgence of military coups in Africa titled, *Soldiers and Citizens: Military Coups and the need for democratic renewal in Africa*.

Dr. Okeke holds a Ph.D. in politics and international studies, from the University of Leeds, United Kingdom, a M.A. in conflict resolution (Bradford) and a mid-career master's in public administration from the Harvard Kennedy School in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Mr. Parfait Onanga-Anyanga is a Gabonese diplomat who has been serving as Special Representative of United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres to the African Union and Head of the United Nations Office to the African Union since 2022. He has extensive experience with the United Nations both in the field and at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

From 1998 to 2004, Parfait Onanga-Anyanga held a variety of political and managerial positions at the Preparatory Commission of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization in Vienna and New York. He served in the Secretary-General's cabinet as a Director from 2007 to 2012 and then worked in the Office of the President of the General Assembly from 2004 to 2007. Appointed by United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Onanga-Anyanga served as the acting Special Representative for the United Nations Office in Burundi from 2012 until 2014. He later held the position of UN Coordinator for the response to the Boko Haram crisis. From 2016 until 2019, Onanga-Anyanga served as the United Nations Special Representative for the Central African Republic and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). From 2019 to 2022, Onanga-Anyanga served as for Guterres' Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa.

Onanga-Anyanga holds a post graduate degree in political science from Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne University and a master's degree in sociology from l'Université Omar Bongo in Libreville, Gabon.

Ms. Jennifer Pulliam is the Peace Operations Capacity Building (POCB) Division Chief in the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs' Office of Global Programs and Initiatives (PM/GPI) at the United States Department of State. In this role, she serves as the Program Director for the U.S. Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI) and the African Peacekeeping Rapid Response Partnership (APRRP). GPOI and APRRP are security assistance programs focused on building international capacity to effectively conduct United Nations and regional peacekeeping operations. Through these programs, the United States partners with nearly 50 troop and police contributors, as well as the United Nations, to provide training, advisory support, equipment, facilities construction, and other technical assistance to enable the more effective generation, preparation, deployment, and sustainment of peacekeeping forces.

Ms. Pulliam formerly served as the GPOI/APRRP Regional Manager for Africa and the Near East, developing strategic program guidance and overseeing training and equipping activities in these regions. Prior to joining the State Department, Ms. Pulliam worked as an Academic Program Officer at the Africa Center for Strategic Studies (ACSS), one of five regional centers under the U.S. Department of Defense, to conduct security-related seminars, workshops, and research activities. Before joining the government, Ms. Pulliam worked with multiple defense contracting companies and, previously, as a business management consultant with KPMG.

Ms. Pulliam has a Master of Science in National Resource Strategy from the Dwight D. Eisenhower School for National Security and Resource Strategy at the National Defense University. She has a Master of Arts in International Affairs and a Master of Business

Administration from the George Washington University in Washington, D.C., and received her undergraduate degree in Economics and Government from the College of William and Mary in Virginia.

Mr. James Saenz is the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Counternarcotics and Stabilization Policy. In this capacity, he is responsible for all policies, strategies, priorities, guidance, resource allocation, and program execution applicable to Department of Defense (DoD) activities concerning counter illicit drug trafficking, counter transnational organized crime, counter threat finance, stability operations, peacekeeping missions, and civil affairs. In addition to supporting counterdrug efforts, counter transnational organized crime activities may include support to counter the illicit trafficking of people, wildlife, natural resources, weapons, and money. Saenz provides insightful and timely policy advice to the Secretary of Defense and other senior DoD officials, and he ensures essential interagency collaboration to counter illicit activity and promote global stability.

Most recently, Saenz worked for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (DC Metro) as the Senior Operations Advisor to the Chief Operating Officer, where he developed strategies and business plans, led enterprise-wide transformation initiatives, and implemented programs to improve delivery of bus, rail, paratransit, and law enforcement services. Previously, Saenz served 30 years as a U.S. Army officer, most of that time in Special Forces (Green Berets), where he completed a variety of assignments throughout the world and commanded at all levels from detachment to brigade. Notably, he commanded two separate Special Forces detachments (A-Teams), the full-accounting mission in Vietnam, and the Army's largest overseas garrison located in Germany. His operational and combat experience includes Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, numerous counter-narcotics missions in South and Central America, several disaster relief efforts in Central America, Operation Enduring Freedom, and multiple Global War on Terrorism activities at home and abroad.

Saenz holds a bachelor's of science in computer science from the United States Military Academy at West Point, a master's of military art and science in strategy from the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, and a master's of science in national resource strategy from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces.

Dr. Rachel Schiller is the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Programs and Operations in the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs (PM). In this capacity, she oversees the Office of Global Programs and Initiatives (GPI) and the Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement (WRA) where she is responsible for security assistance programs and policies that strengthen security sector governance, build capacity of foreign partners to respond to peacekeeping operations worldwide, address the threat of landmines and unexploded ordnance, and prevent illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons, including man-portable air defense systems (MANPADS). Rachel is a career member of the Senior Executive Service and has served in multiple positions in the Department of State, including as the Director of the Office of Management Policy and Resources in the Bureau of International Organization Affairs (IO); the Chief of Staff and Director of Strategy and Resource Coordination for the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs; the Senior Advisor for Peacekeeping in IO; in the Office of the Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Region of Africa; in the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations; and in IO's Office of UN Political Affairs. Before

joining the State Department, Rachel was an advisor to the United Nations and the World Bank, where she worked intensively on the Aceh peace process in Indonesia. She also worked for the International Rescue Committee providing humanitarian assistance in conflict zones across Indonesia. She holds a Ph.D. and a master's degree from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in international conflict resolution, negotiation, and mediation, and a bachelor's degree from the University of Pennsylvania. Rachel is a 2020-2021 International Women's Forum Fellow.

Ambassador Michele Sison was sworn in as Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs on December 21, 2021. She served as U.S. Ambassador to Haiti from February 2018 to October 2021, and as U.S. Deputy Representative to the United Nations 2014-2018, where she helped build global coalitions to counter transnational threats to peace and security and advocated for a more effective, efficient, and accountable UN and multilateral system. Ambassador Sison has long experience with UN peacekeeping and the UN entities responsible for development, humanitarian relief, and human rights. Ambassador Sison served as U.S. Ambassador to Sri Lanka and Maldives (2012-2014), U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon (2008-2010), and U.S. Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates (2004-2008). Ambassador Sison's diplomatic assignments also include Assistant Chief of Mission in Baghdad, Iraq; Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs; Deputy Chief of Mission in Islamabad, Pakistan; Consul General in Chennai, India; and tours in Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Benin, and Togo. She also served as the State Department's Director of Career Development and Assignments. Ambassador Sison is the recipient of the U.S. Presidential Distinguished Service Award, U.S. Presidential Meritorious Service Award, and the U.S. Department of the Army's Outstanding Civilian Service Medal. She holds numerous U.S. Department of State awards, including Ambassadorial-level awards for her contributions to counter-proliferation and combatting trafficking in persons. Ambassador Sison holds the rank of Career Ambassador, the highest rank in the U.S. Foreign Service.

Brigadier General Joyce Sitienei was appointed Director of the International Peace Support Training Centre (IPSTC) on 23 July 2021. She is an education officer in the Kenya Defense Forces. She has extensive experience in training in instructional methodology and adult education techniques. She also has wide knowledge and practice in curriculum design.

Brigadier Joyce Sitienei has held several key appointments since joining the military service, such as Unit Education Officer in the Women Service Corps and the 15 Kenya Rifles; Instructor and Head of Distance Learning at the Defense Forces School of Higher Education; SO2 Lessons Learnt, Head of Curriculum design, Head of Applied Research and Col Plans and Programs at the IPSTC.

In 2001 she worked in Rwanda as part of the Kenya Military Assistance Training Team (KMATT) and in 2002-2003 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo as a Military Observer. During this time, she developed great interest in gender issues and went on to participate in gender training all over Africa on behalf of the IPSTC and the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre - Canada.

She has actively participated in the Ministry of Defense/KDF and the IPSTC gender mainstreaming processes and has practical experience in undertaking gender needs assessment and gender policy formulation. She continues to facilitate training workshops and courses

imparting practical gender mainstreaming skills and knowledge in support of the Institutionalization of gender at IPSTC and the Kenya Defense Forces.

Her decorations include Moran of the Order of the Burning Spear (MBS), United Nations and other constitutional medals earned in service of the country. She holds a bachelor's degree in education from Kenyatta University, master's degree in international studies from the University of Nairobi and a post-graduate diploma in peace and conflict studies from the Africa Nazarene University.

General (Ret.) Osman Nour Soubagle a distinguished military leader from the Republic of Djibouti was the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) Force Commander from 2016-2018. His contributions to AMISOM were multifaceted, having previously served as Djibouti's representative in AMISOM's Military Operations Coordination Committee (MOCC) and as Chief of Defense Staff at AMISOM between 2012 and 2013.

General Soubagle began his military career in the artillery branch, and later transferred to the military engineers corps. Furthering his education, he completed the Command and General Staff College (CGSC) in the United States. In addition, he later attended the Naval Post Graduate School in Monterrey. After recently leaving active service, General Soubagle continued dealing with regional and security affairs as a sought-after advisor.

Dr. Paul Williams is a Professor in the Elliott School of International Affairs at the George Washington University, and Director of the M.A. program in Security Policy Studies. Prior to moving to the Elliott School in 2006, Dr. Williams was a faculty member at the University of Birmingham and the University of Warwick in the UK.

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