



Organized Crime in Central America

Tuesday, December 14, 2010

9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Speakers' Biographies

Christopher Ashe serves as the Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI) action officer in the Department of State's Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, Office of Central American Affairs. In this role, he coordinates the Department of State and inter-agency planning process for the determination of U.S. government citizen safety priorities, and the development of related programs, to address the declining safety environment in the seven nations of Central America. Ashe has been with the Department of State since 2004, and has served in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs and in U.S. embassies in Jakarta, Indonesia, and Helsinki, Finland. Prior to joining the Department of State, he held a variety of jobs in both government and the private sector, including the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, the U.S. Postal Service (International Business Unit and Headquarters Marketing organizations), and in defense and management consulting firms with business in the United States, Europe and Asia. Ashe holds a degree in International Studies from American University.

James Bosworth is a freelance writer and consultant based in Managua, Nicaragua. Most recently, he has written reports on Latin American security and politics, radicalization and recruitment efforts by Al Qaeda online, and cyber-security cooperation to combat the Conficker botnet. In early 2010, Bosworth spent 60 days on board the USS Carl Vinson, providing strategic communications and assessments support to the Carrier Strike Group as it traveled around the Western Hemisphere. Prior to freelancing, he was associate for communications at the Inter-American Dialogue and director of research at the Rendon Group. Over the past six years, he has written "Bloggings by Boz," where he provides daily analysis and commentary on Latin American politics and U.S. foreign policy. Bosworth has a B.A. in political science and history from Washington University in St. Louis.

Douglas Farah is a senior fellow at the International Assessment and Strategy Center and president of IBI Consultants. He regularly briefs the military, Department of Homeland Security, and Department of Justice on issues relating to terrorism, organized crime, and failed states. Farah is currently working on contract with U.S. government agencies and private foundations on Latin American issues of organized crime, drug trafficking, and terrorism. He is the author of *Blood From Stones: The Secret Financial Network of Terror* and co-author of *Merchant of Death: Guns, Planes and the Man Who Makes War Possible*. In 2004, he worked with the Consortium for the Study of Intelligence, studying armed groups and intelligence reform. Previously for two decades, Farah was a foreign correspondent and investigative reporter for *The Washington Post* and other publications, covering Latin America and West Africa. He won numerous

awards for his work in covering civil wars, transnational drug trafficking, and political upheaval.

Juan Carlos Garzón is a specialist for the Department of Democratic Stability and Special Missions for the Political Affairs Secretary of the Organization of American States (OAS). He was formerly the director of the Analysis Unit for the OAS Mission to Support the Peace Process in Colombia. Prior to joining the OAS, he worked as a researcher in the Colombian government office of the vice president Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law Observatory; and as the coordinator of the security and armed conflict analysis unit in the Security and Democracy Foundation, based in Bogotá. Garzón recently published the book *Mafia & Co.: The Criminal Networks in Mexico, Brazil, and Colombia*, and has authored numerous newspaper and academic journal articles relating to the armed conflict in Colombia, the peace process with paramilitary groups, drug trafficking, and urban violence. He received his B.A. in political science with a focus on international relations from the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana in Bogotá, and an M.A. in theory and armed conflict resolution from Colombia's Universidad de Los Andes.

Julie López is a freelance journalist based in Guatemala, where she reports on politics and security issues. Her work has been published widely, including in *ReVista: The Harvard Review of Latin America*, and *The Miami Herald*. In May 2010, López won the Félix Varela National Award for Excellence in American Journalism on Latino Issues—in the print category—for her series "The Narco Empire," published in *El Diario/La Prensa* in 2009. She has an M.A. in International Relations and an M.A. in Journalism, and has taught journalism and coverage of international issues at graduate and undergraduate levels in the United States.