

## International Workshop on Transnational Extremist Organizations

19-20 September 2016

Room 226, Paul Robeson Center, Rutgers University  
350 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, Newark, NJ 07102

Organizers:

Olivier J. Walther, University of Southern Denmark

William F.S. Miles, Northeastern University

### Day 1 - Monday 19 September 2016

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10:00 – 10:30am Welcome remarks by Jean-Marc Coicaud, Rutgers University

10:30am – 11am Introduction to the workshop, Olivier Walther, University of Southern Denmark

11am – 12pm [Panel 1 – How borders affect the diffusion of transnational extremist organizations](#)

Chair: Steven M. Radil, University of Idaho

Olivier Walther, University of Southern Denmark; Christian Leuprecht, Royal Military College of Canada; David Skillicorn, Queen's University

*Violent Extremist Organizations and Irregular Warfare in the Sahel-Sahara*

Christian Leuprecht, Royal Military College of Canada; David Skillicorn, Queen's University; Olivier Walther, University of Southern Denmark

*The Diffusion and Permeability of Political Violence in North and West Africa*

12pm – 1:45pm Lunch break on campus (Room 235, Paul Robeson Center)

2pm – 3pm [Panel 2 – How transnational groups disrupt states](#)

Chair: Christian Leuprecht, Royal Military College of Canada

Jaume Castan Pinos, University of Southern Denmark

*Sovereignty and Territory in Contemporary Terrorist Organizations*

Anouar Boukhars, McDaniel College

*The Trajectories of Ideological and Religious Radicalization in the Sahel*

3pm – 3:30pm Coffee break

3:30pm – 4pm Bruce Whitehouse, Lehigh University

*Public Perceptions of Violent Extremism in Mali*

7pm Gala dinner in New York City (Pennsylvania 6)

## Day 2 – Tuesday 20 September 2016

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9:30am – 10am [Panel 3 – Can network and spatial analysis contribute to disrupt transnational extremist organizations?](#)

Chair: Olivier Walther, University of Southern Denmark

Sean Everton; Dan Cunningham, Naval Postgraduate School

*Exploring the Spatial and Social Networks of Transnational Extremist Organizations*

10am – 10:30am Coffee break

10:30 – 11am Steven M. Radil, University of Idaho

*Toward a Network Theory of the Diffusion of ‘New’ Wars*

12pm – 1:45pm Lunch break on campus (Room 235, Paul Robeson Center)

2pm – 3pm [Panel 4 – The institutional response to transnational extremist organizations](#)

Chair: William F.S. Miles, Northeastern University

William F.S. Miles, Northeastern University

*Fracturing of Postcolonial Borders and African Islamist Extremism*

Nik Emmanuel, University of Copenhagen

*External Incentives and African Cross-Border Cooperation in the War on Terror: Lessons from the Lake Chad Basin*

3pm – 3:30pm Coffee break

3:30 – 4:30pm Leonardo A. Villalón, University of Florida (tbc)

*The Transnational Dimension of Radical Groups and its Consequences for Political Stability in West Africa*

Matteo Sestito, United Nations Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate

*Preventing the Cross-border Movement of Foreign Terrorist Fighters and the Exploitation of Information Communication Technologies for Terrorist Purposes*

4:30pm – 5pm [Workshop Recommendations – Open Discussion](#)

Chair: Jaume Castan Pinos, University of Southern Denmark

## Abstracts

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### Panel 1 – How borders affect the diffusion of transnational extremist organizations

#### **Violent Extremist Organizations and Irregular Warfare in the Sahel-Sahara**

Olivier Walther, University of Southern Denmark  
Christian Leuprecht, Royal Military College of Canada  
David Skillicorn, Queen’s University

This article examines the structure and spatial patterns of violent political organizations in the Sahel-Sahara, a region characterized by growing political instability over the last 20 years. Drawing on a public collection of disaggregated data, the article uses network science to represent alliances and conflicts of 179 organizations that were involved in violent events between 1997 and 2014. To this end, we combine two spectral embedding techniques that have previously been considered separately: one for directed graphs (relationships are asymmetric), and one for signed graphs (relationships are positive or negative). Our result show that groups that are net attackers are indistinguishable at the level of their individual behavior, but clearly separate into pro- and anti-political violence based on the groups to which they are close. The second part of the article maps a series of 389 events related to nine Trans-Saharan Islamist groups between 2004 and 2014. Spatial analysis suggests that cross-border movement has intensified following the establishment of military bases by AQIM in Mali but reveals no evidence of a border ‘sanctuary’. Owing to the transnational nature of conflict, the article shows that national management strategies and foreign military interventions have profoundly affected the movement of Islamist groups.

#### **The Diffusion and Permeability of Political Violence in North and West Africa**

Christian Leuprecht, Royal Military College of Canada  
David Skillicorn, Queen’s University  
Olivier Walther, University of Southern Denmark

This paper explores the spatial and temporal diffusion of political violence in North and West Africa. It does so by endeavoring to represent the mental landscape that lives in the back of a group leader’s mind as he contemplates strategic targeting. We assume that this representation is a combination of the physical geography of the target environment, and the mental and physical cost of following a seemingly random pattern of attacks. Focusing on the distance and time between attacks and taking into consideration the transaction costs that state boundaries impose, we wish to understand what constrains a group leader to attack at a location other than the one that would seem to yield the greatest overt payoff. By its very nature, the research problem defies the collection of a full set of structural data. Instead, we leverage functional data from the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data project (ACLED) dataset that, inter alia, meticulously catalogues violent extremist incidents in North and West Africa since 1997, to generate a network whose nodes are administrative regions. These nodes are connected by edges of qualitatively different types: undirected edges representing geographic distance, undirected edges representing borders, and directed edges representing consecutive attacks by the same group at the two endpoints. We analyze the resulting network using novel spectral embedding techniques that are able to account fully for the different types of edges. The result is a “map” of North and West Africa that depicts the permeability to violence. A better understanding of how location, time, and borders condition attacks enables planning, prepositioning, and response.

## Panel 2 – How transnational groups disrupt the territorial and ideological control of the state

### **The Weight of Sovereignty and Territory in Contemporary Terrorist Organizations**

Jaume Castan Pinos, University of Southern Denmark

In recent years, the study of terrorism and extremist organizations has largely focused on the transnational de-territorialized character of these entities. New terrorism, it has been claimed, is framed as a territorially diffused network with global orientation as opposed to old territorialised and structured terror. One of the potential flaws of such analyses is neglecting the prominence of territory, space and control over both phenomena, in other words, sovereignty. This article argues that it is essential to include the sovereignty dimension as a crucial vehicle for understanding and explaining contemporary terrorism. A point that will be developed is that terrorist groups are sometimes too engaged in their political and religious dogma to notice their latent goal of dominating geography. With the aim of supporting this argument, the article will analyse the strategies and discourses related to territory and sovereignty from contemporary groups, namely the Islamic State, Al Qaeda and Hezbollah. The article will tentatively conclude that despite their divergent nature, structure and political aims, the three organizations share the fact that the sovereignty/territorial dimension is of paramount importance to all of them.

### **Trajectories of Ideological and Religious Radicalization in the Sahel**

Anouar Boukhars, McDaniel College

Transnational extremist organizations operating in the Sahel Sahara region have gained in prominence amid a toxic cocktail of crises, particularly in precarious states already weighed down by entrenched local conflicts, criminal webs, and political misrule. Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and other potent militant groups such as Mokhtar Belmokhtar' *al-Mourabitoun* have evolved after the setbacks incurred during France's 2013 Operation Serval in Mali. Both movements have shifted shape and are back in business in a reshuffled landscape of militancy. The rash of terrorist attacks on hotels in Mali, Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast have demonstrated the deep reach of AQIM. Since the introduction of IS in the region and its own merger with Belmokhtar, the group has sought to prove its relevance in an increasingly fractured jihadist world. This paper focuses on this evolving jihadist landscape. In so doing it examines the trends behind the realignment within jihadist groups and the interaction of the expanding horizon of militancy with conflicts, political vacuums and Western response policy.

### **Public Perceptions of Violent Extremism in Mali**

Bruce Whitehouse, Lehigh University

Although the 2012 takeover of northern Mali by a coalition of jihadi groups (including Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, Ansar Dine and the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa) caught much of the world by surprise, armed jihadism had been present on Malian territory for several years. Still today, however, Malians have widely divergent views of these groups and the threat they pose to the Malian state. To analyze this range of views and interpret what they suggest about the place of armed jihadism in Malian society, I examine social surveys and media discourse since the onset of Mali's present crisis.

### Panel 3 – How can network and spatial analysis disrupt transnational extremist organizations?

#### **Exploring the Spatial and Social Networks of Transnational Extremist Organizations**

Sean Everton, Naval Postgraduate School

Dan Cunningham, Naval Postgraduate School

Group conflict can often be traced to both spatial and social processes. Research has demonstrated that both overlapping geospatial areas (i.e., turf) and the pattern of ties between groups (i.e., social networks) can facilitate, as well as constrain, group conflict. Interestingly, however, seldom have these studies simultaneously accounted for these interrelated but distinct mechanisms; instead, they have examined them separately. This gap reflects, in part, the fact that until recently social scientists have lacked the methodological tools needed in order to capture the dynamics of both mechanisms. This has all changed, however, with the advent of exponential random graph models (ERGMs) and stochastic actor oriented models (SAOMs). In this paper, using data from the Armed Conflict Location and Event Dataset (ACLED), we propose to draw on these methodological tools in order to model both the spatial and social network causes of violence between African transnational extremist organizations (TEOs). Results of our analysis should have implications for the crafting of strategies and/or policies that will limit TEO violence in the future.

#### **Toward a Network Theory of the Diffusion of ‘New’ Wars**

Steven M. Radil, University of Idaho

Previous work to understand the diffusion of war, or the spread of war in space and time, was grounded in a state-based conception of war and biased toward a state-based conception of the international system. Increased attention to the salience of non-state actors in the initiation and spread of contemporary conflict has provided an opportunity to rethink the dynamics of war diffusion. This paper considers a social network-based approach to this problem by emphasizing the notion of network transitivity, or the potential for relations to cluster within subparts of a social network. Considering a conflict network of negative ties that includes both state and non-state actors, high levels of transitivity are theorized to be less likely to spatially diffuse as conflict should be expected to remain localized within the geographic settings already impacted by the war. Conversely, conflict networks with low levels of transitivity may be those with more potential to spread to involve new participants in other settings. These ideas will be exemplified using data from historical and contemporary cases of war as well the potential for the transitivity of a conflict network to increase or decrease over time.

### Panel 4 – The institutional response to transnational extremist organizations

#### **Fracturing of Postcolonial Borders and African Islamist Extremism**

William F.S. Miles, Northeastern University

When the Organization of African Union (precursor to today’s African Union) embedded in its founding charter the principle of inviolability of inherited colonial borders, its framers had in mind territorial expansiveness by potentially aggressive neighbors. The last thing it had in mind was the grave and chronic violation of sovereignty by organizations driven by religious extremism. Preservation of colonial-inherited boundaries was not merely viewed as a mechanism for reducing the likelihood of inter-state disputes; it was seen as a building block for larger regional federations. These regional units, or confederations, could then act as more viable economic units in the world at large. African regionalism

in the 1960s was viewed as a building block in the process that by the 1980s would become known as globalization. What we have experienced over the last decade, however, is the fracturing of African borders for reasons unpredictable in the 1960s: the rise of Islamist extremism. From Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb in North Africa to Boko Haram in West Africa to Al-Shabbab in East Africa, extremist violence associated with Islamism has gravely harmed life, limb, and national sovereignty. International interventions, from French operations in Mali to American interventions from Djibouti, have shed a spotlight on the porous borders that undermine peace, security, and prosperity in many African borderlands, turning them rather into shatterzones. Multiple are the programs of assistance from Western nations designed to aid African governments in their struggle to secure their borders. Such efforts have met with mitigated success. Relative inattention to African borders is a geopolitical oversight with underappreciated dangers to Europe and the United States, not to mention Africa itself.

### **External Incentives and African Cross-Border Cooperation in the War on Terror: Lessons from the Lake Chad Basin**

Nik Emmanuel, University of Copenhagen

Clearly, the best way to deal with a transnational threat is a transnational response that flows easily across borders, like the menace it faces. Given this reality, my paper advances our understanding of the ways in which extra-African states are encouraging and facilitating cross-border collaboration on the continent in the fight against transnational extremist organizations (TEOs) such as Boko Haram. There has been extensive discussion among scholars, policy-makers and journalists about how the international community can assist African states in mitigating the many problems posed by the resilience and strength of certain TEOs. Yet, a lacuna exists in what has been written on the topic concerning how key international players are helping to facilitate inter-African cooperation to fight terrorism on the continent. I focus on the following two questions: 1) what are the key extra-continental actors offering as far as incentives, and 2) what impact are the actions by external players having on inter-state cooperation to fight terrorism in Africa? Here, I will explore the example of how the states around the Lake Chad Basin (Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroon) are working together to fight Boko Haram. Particular attention will be paid to cross-border military and police activities undertaken by the four states in the subregion, and how outside players are helping their efforts.

### **The Transnational Dimension of Radical Groups and its Consequences for Political Stability in West Africa**

Leonardo A. Villalón, University of Florida

### **Preventing the Cross-border Movement of Foreign Terrorist Fighters and the Exploitation of Information Communication Technologies for Terrorist Purposes**

Matteo Sestito, United Nations Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate

The global threat emanating from the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) remains high and continues to diversify. Recent estimates suggest that over 30,000 foreign terrorist fighters from more than 100 countries have become involved in the conflict in Syria, Iraq and Libya. Most recently, continuing pressure on ISIL in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic has also increased the likelihood of lone actor terrorist attacks committed by individuals unable to travel to the conflict zones. Against this backdrop, many States continue to face challenges in designing and implementing comprehensive border-management strategies, especially in the context of porous borders and the identification of departing or transiting foreign terrorist fighters. Some States have responded to the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters by increasing the number of official border points and/or the number of

officials assigned to those points or by strengthening the technological capacity of existing border points. Some employ modern communication and surveillance methods to monitor border sections beyond official crossing points. The United Nations continues to support Member States in their efforts to implement comprehensive and coordinated approaches to address the threat of terrorism in the context of cross-border activities, prevention, contingency planning, management and implementation of effective responses to acts of terrorism, by joining efforts of specialized international organizations and United Nations entities with border management and law enforcement control mandates or relevance. In the borderless sphere, ISIL's online activity has fuelled unprecedented growth in the number of foreign terrorist fighters travelling to Iraq, Syria and Libya, as well as to third countries, where they continue to plan and carry out terrorist attacks. These include online forums to disseminate information on ways for such fighters to avoid detection while crossing borders, using routes that will not raise suspicion, and to alert them to the particular elements that States look for when screening at borders. The threat has been described in several United Nations documents, including the two latest reports of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat (S/2016/92) and (S/2016/501). The presentation will touch on the main challenges in preventing the cross-border movement of foreign terrorist fighters and on preventing the exploitation of information communication technologies for terrorist purposes. It will conclude with a few examples of the efforts by the United Nations to support the efforts of Member States to counter the threat posed by ISIL in both the online and offline spheres.

## Important information

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### Venue

The workshop is hosted by the Division of Global Affairs at Rutgers. It will take place at the Paul Robeson Center, Rutgers University, 350 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, Newark, NJ 07102, room 226. The university campus is at walking distance from Newark's Penn Station (15 minutes).

Directions to the Rutgers University Newark Campus can be found here:

<https://law.newark.rutgers.edu/about-school/contact-us/visiting-us>

### Panels and panel chairs

Each panellist will give a 15-20 minute presentation followed by 10-15 minutes of Questions & Answers.

Panel chairs are kindly asked to introduce the speakers, keep time, and call on members of the audience during Questions & Answers.

### Parking

Parking is available at the Hilton for anyone driving and staying there (\$23.00 a day). If you need parking on the university campus (Deck 1, 200 University Avenue), please send Olivier Walther the following information; Guest name(s), vehicle information which includes license plate, number, make, model and color by Thursday, September 15th and we'll get parking passes for you.

### Edited book

A selection of papers presented at the workshop will be published as an edited book in the Routledge Series in African and International Politics (<https://www.routledge.com/Routledge-Studies-in-African-Politics-and-International-Relations/book-series/RSAPIR>). The organizers will be in touch with interested participants after the workshop regarding publication guidelines and deadlines.

### 'Chatham House'

The presentations and discussions are taking place under 'Chatham House' rules of non-attribution, to allow for as open and frank a discussion as possible

### Contacts

If you have any questions, please feel free to call Olivier Walther (+45.20.25.27.12, [ow@sam.sdu.dk](mailto:ow@sam.sdu.dk)), Jaume Castan Pinos (+45-50.16.30.98) on their cell phones or contact Desiree Gordon, Administrative Assistant, Division of Global Affairs, 175 University Avenue Room 220A, Conklin Hall Newark, NJ 07102, Phone: (973) 353-5585 Fax: (973) 353-5074, [desireeg@andromeda.rutgers.edu](mailto:desireeg@andromeda.rutgers.edu)

Have a safe trip. We look forward to seeing you in Newark!

## Participants

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### Organizers

**Olivier J. Walther** is an Associate Professor at the Department of Political Science at the University of Southern Denmark and a Visiting Professor at the Division of Global Affairs at Rutgers University in the U.S. He holds a Ph.D. in Geography from the University of Lausanne. Dr. Walther is primarily interested in understanding how borders affect social networks. In West Africa, he studies cross-border trade and border markets, cross-border cooperation, and the spatial patterns of transnational terrorist organizations. In Western Europe, his research interest lies in the comparative study of cross-border policy networks and cross-border labor markets in metropolitan regions. His work combines geographic information systems, social network analysis, statistical analysis and qualitative interviews.. He is the Africa Editor of the Journal of Borderlands Studies. [ow@sam.sdu.dk](mailto:ow@sam.sdu.dk)

**William F.S. Miles** is professor of political science at Northeastern University in Boston. His latest book *Scars of Partition* (University of Nebraska Press) examines contemporary legacies of French-British colonial partition in the borderlands of West Africa, the West Indies, South Asia and the Indian Ocean, Southeast Asia, and the South Pacific. His research in Israel-Palestine has been published in *The Middle East Journal* ("Border Pedagogy in Israel"); he has most recently conducted five months of fieldwork along the Israeli-Lebanese border. Author of *Hausaland Divided: Colonialism and Independence in Nigeria and Niger*, Professor Miles is Palgrave Series co-editor for *African Borderlands Studies* and is on the executive committee of the African Borderlands Research Network (ABORNE). [b.miles@northeastern.edu](mailto:b.miles@northeastern.edu)

### Panelists

**Anouar Boukhars** is an Associate Professor of international relations at McDaniel College in Westminster, Maryland and a nonresident scholar in Carnegie's Middle East Program in Washington, DC. He is also the lead facilitator of the Executive Master's in Managing Peace and Security in Africa at the Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Boukhars is a former fellow at the Brookings Doha Center and author of *Politics in Morocco: Executive Monarchy and Enlightened Authoritarianism*. He is also a co-editor of *Perilous Desert: Sources of Saharan Insecurity* with Frederic Wehrey, and *Perspectives on Western Sahara: Myths, Nationalisms and Geopolitics* with Jacques Roussellier. His other publications have appeared in a number of outlets, including the Journal of the Middle East and Africa, Journal of Conflict Studies, International Political Science Review, European Security and Orient. [aboukhars@mcdaniel.edu](mailto:aboukhars@mcdaniel.edu)

**Jaume Castan Pinos** is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Political Science and Public Management, University of Southern Denmark. He holds a Ph.D. in International Politics (Queen's University Belfast, 2011). He was the organiser of the summer school 'Debating secessionism in Europe' (2013 and 2014) and he is currently the Director of the European Studies Bachelor programme at the University of Southern Denmark. His academic interests are framed by ethno-territorial conflicts, sovereignty and political violence. He has conducted extensive research, published in various journals and reputable academic publishers, in North Africa and former Yugoslavia. He is currently working on a book scrutinising the consequences of Humanitarian Intervention in Kosovo (Routledge). [jaume@sam.sdu.dk](mailto:jaume@sam.sdu.dk)

**Jean-Marc Coicaud** is Professor of Law and Global Affairs at Rutgers University. He is also Global Ethics Fellow with the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs, and Fellow, Academia Europaea. Prior to being at Rutgers, Jean-Marc Coicaud worked for the United Nations, first as a speechwriter for the United Nations Secretary-General and then as a Director of Research with the United Nations University in Tokyo, and Director of the United Nations University Office in New York. Jean-Marc Coicaud holds a PhD in law-political science and a Doctorat d'Etat in political theory. He has been a fellow and visiting scholar at Harvard University, Tsinghua University, Academia Sinica, among others. He has published widely in the fields of international law, international relations, political and legal theory. His last book, published in 2016 with Cambridge University Press, dealt with emotions in politics. [jc1481@andromeda.rutgers.edu](mailto:jc1481@andromeda.rutgers.edu)

**Dan Cunningham** is an Associate Faculty for Instruction at the Common Operational Research Environment (CORE) Lab embedded in the Naval Postgraduate School's (NPS) Department of Defense Analysis (DA) in Monterey, CA. Dan earned his MA at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies (MIIS) with a focus on terrorism studies. His areas of research include visual analytics and the application of social network analysis to real-world problem sets. He led the development of the CORE Lab's social network analysis outreach and education program, and he has worked with a wide-range of practitioners, including U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF), Law Enforcement, and international partners. He is currently working toward his PhD in Information Sciences at NPS. [dtcunnin@nps.edu](mailto:dtcunnin@nps.edu)

**Nikolas Emmanuel** is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science and the Centre for Resolution of International Conflict at the University of Copenhagen. He has a Ph.D. in political science from the University of California, Davis, a B.A. in political science from the University of California, San Diego and an M.Phil. in political science and African studies from the Institut d'Études Politiques and the Centre d'Études d'Afrique Noire in Bordeaux, France. His research is in the area of international relations and comparative politics, with an emphasis on the use of third party incentive strategies to facilitate changes in the behavior of various state and non-state actors in Africa and beyond. [ne@cric.ku.dk](mailto:ne@cric.ku.dk)

**Sean Everton** is an Associate Professor in the Defense Analysis Department at the Naval Postgraduate School. Professor Everton earned his MA and PhD in Sociology at Stanford University. He has published in the areas of social network analysis, sociology of religion, economic sociology, and political sociology and currently specializes in the use of social network analysis to track and disrupt criminal and terrorist networks. His monograph, *Disrupting Dark Networks*, was published by Cambridge University Press in 2012. His latest book (written with Daniel Cunningham and Philip Murphy), *Understanding Dark Networks*, was published by Rowman and Littlefield earlier this year. He is currently at work on articles and a book that explore the interplay of social networks and religion. [sfeverto@nps.edu](mailto:sfeverto@nps.edu)

**Christian Leuprecht** is Professor of Political Science at the Royal Military College of Canada, cross-appointed to the Department of Political Studies and the School of Policy Studies at Queen's University, and Munk Senior Fellow in Security and Defence at the Macdonald Laurier Institute. He is a fellow of the College of New Scholars, Artists, and Scientists of the Royal Society of Canada and holds a Governor-in-Council appointment to the governing Council of the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, is president of the International Sociological Association's Research Committee 01: Armed Forces and Conflict Resolution, and a United Nations Security Structure Expert. An expert on security and defence, political demography, and comparative federalism and multilevel governance, he is regularly called as an expert witness to testify before committees of Parliament. [Christian.Leuprecht@rmcc-cmrc.ca](mailto:Christian.Leuprecht@rmcc-cmrc.ca)

**Steven Radil** is an Assistant Professor of Geography at the University of Idaho and is a political geographer with interests in territoriality, social networks, and other spatialities of political power. His primary research revolves around issues of conflictual politics, especially the geographies of war at various scales; he has published on a diverse set of political topics, including terrorism, interstate war, civil war, and urban violence. Dr. Radil's current research explores ways to theorize political agency geographically, the importance of context at multiple scales for political outcomes, and the increasing role of geospatial technology in politics. He has methodological expertise in spatial analysis, social network analysis, and Geographic Information Science and routinely uses these tools in his work. [sradil@uidaho.edu](mailto:sradil@uidaho.edu)

**David Skillicorn** is a Professor in the School of Computing at Queen's University. His undergraduate degree is from the University of Sydney and his Ph.D. from the University of Manitoba. He has published extensively in the area of adversarial data analytics, including his recent books "Understanding High-Dimensional Spaces" and "Knowledge Discovery for Counterterrorism and Law Enforcement". He has also been involved in interdisciplinary research on radicalisation, terrorism, and financial fraud. He consults for the intelligence and security arms of government in several countries, and appears frequently in the media to comment on cybersecurity and terrorism. [skill@cs.queensu.ca](mailto:skill@cs.queensu.ca)

**Matteo Sestito** is an Associate Political Affairs Officer with the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) in New York. As a member of the Planning, Analysis and Research Unit, Mr. Sestito notably works on issues related to countering terrorist use of information communication technologies, border security and law enforcement, human rights aspects of counterterrorism, and countering and preventing violent extremism. Prior to joining CTED, Mr. Sestito served as an Associate Human Rights Officer at the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva. He also managed the participation of civil society representatives in the sessions of the Human Rights Council. Prior to joining the United Nations, Mr. Sestito was an academic researcher at the Munk School of Global Affairs, at the University of Toronto. He also served as an intelligence analyst in Canada. Mr. Sestito holds a Master's degree in European, Russian and Eurasian Studies from the University of Toronto. [sestito@un.org](mailto:sestito@un.org)

**Leonardo A. Villalón** is Dean of the International Center and Professor of Political Science and African Studies at the University of Florida, where he also coordinates the UF Sahel Research Group. He is a specialist on the politics of the Francophone countries of the African Sahel (Senegal, Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, and Chad). His research has focused on the political role of Islam, especially on democratization, education, and political stability. His research has been supported by Fulbright and Carnegie Scholars awards, and by grants from the US State Department, the UK Department for International Development (DfID), and the Minerva initiative. He is currently co-editor of the *Journal of Modern African Studies*. [lvillalon@ufic.ufl.edu](mailto:lvillalon@ufic.ufl.edu)

**Bruce Whitehouse** is Associate Professor of anthropology in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology and director of the Global Studies program at Lehigh University. He has published findings from this research in journals including *Africa Today*, *African Security*, *Global Networks*, *Hommes et Migrations*, and *Social Science & Medicine*. His book *Migrants and Strangers in an African City*, an ethnography of transnational migration between the western Sahel and the Congo Basin, was published in 2012 by Indiana University Press. He has received grants from the National Science Foundation and the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, and a Fulbright scholarship to study marriage patterns in Bamako, Mali. His blog "Bridges from Bamako" became a widely consulted resource for information about the country in 2012. [bruce.whitehouse@lehigh.edu](mailto:bruce.whitehouse@lehigh.edu)