**29 September, 2016**

***"Future of Eurasia: Cultural Perspectives, Geopolitics and Energy Security"***

***Panel Discussion Participants’ Bios***

**Mr. Robert W. Kurz,**  currently serves as a Central and Eastern European analyst and the Research Production Manager for the Foreign Military Studies Office (FMSO) at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Organized in the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command under the TRADOC G2, FMSO conducts unclassified research of foreign perspectives on defense and security issues important for understanding environments in which the U.S. military operates. Robert has served at FMSO for over eleven years, and his research and collaborative projects have taken him to numerous locations to include Egypt, Germany, the Baltic States, Romania and Ukraine. Robert also served as a West Africa and Balkans Senior Analyst at the U.S. European Command (USEUCOM) Joint Intelligence Operations Center Europe (JIOCEUR) Analytic Center (JAC) at R.A.F. Molesworth, United Kingdom, for over eight years. At the JAC, Robert was selected to lead several analytical forums in allied nations, which helped prepare him for FMSO’s foreign perspective research mission. In addition to his Army Civilian capacity, Robert is also a U.S. Army Reserve Military Intelligence (MI) officer assigned to USEUCOM, where he serves as a Lieutenant Colonel in support of USEUCOM J2. Robert has served as a Reserve officer throughout the USEUCOM Theater for over twenty years with multiple periods of active duty, including Operation Iraqi Freedom and, more recently, six months in Romania.

**Dr. Christopher Marsh,** Professor, National Security and Strategic Studies, the School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS). Dr. Marsh holds the Ph.D. in political science from the University of Connecticut, and completed graduate study at Moscow State University. He conducted much of his dissertation research at the Russian Academy of Science, and later was a post-doctoral fellow at the Institute on Culture, Religion, and World Affairs at Boston University. Dr. Marsh is the author of five books, including *Russian Foreign Policy: Interests, Vectors, and Sectors*.

**Dr. Tseggai Isaac**  was born in Eritrea, East Africa. He came to the United States in 1972 as a student. He finished his undergraduate studies at Olivet Nazarene University located in Kankakee, Illinois majoring in History. Subsequently, he pursued his graduate studies earning PhD degree In Political Science from the University of Missouri- Columbia. Dr. Isaac is a tenured faculty member at the Missouri University of Science and Technology –Rolla, in the Department of History and Political Science. He currently teaches Political Science courses at MS&T and was teaching there for the last 25 years. In 2009- 2011, Dr. Isaac served as a Cultural and Foreign Language Advisor at the Maneuver and Support Center of Excellence. As a Cultural and Foreign Language Advisor, he taught *U.S. Army Captains Career Course (CCC) Common Core***,** and the BOLIC I Cultural Awareness classes. He also participated in Field Exercises, class observations, and provided cultural input based on those observations and participations. While at the MSCoE, from time to time, Dr. Isaac completed written analytical briefs regarding contemporary developments to the Commanding General, General Gregory Martin, to the Director of Doctrine and Training, COL John McClellan, Mr. David Dunstedter, Technical Supervisor, and Mr. John Arata, Chief G-3 Training. During his tenure as a CFLA, Dr. Isaac also produced general and a peer reviewed articles, among others*, Faith and Culture in the Middle East: Roads to Peace or Catalysts for Crisis,* ***Journal of Homeland Security,*** and an article for the ***Military Police Intelligence Bulletin*** titled “*Cultural Awareness in the Army: Harnessing the Disciplines”.* The ***Journal of Homeland Security*** is issued by the Institute of Justice and International Studies of the University of Central Missouri. Dr. Isaac’s books include:

1. Tseggai Isaac and Andrew Targowski. ***African Civilization in the 21st Century: A Study of Cultures***, Nova Scientific Publishers 2014.

2. Tseggai Isaac. ***The Third World in Global Perspective: A Journey from Hope to Despair***, African World Press, 2015.

3. Tseggai Isaac. ***American Government from the Perspective of Leaders, Lawgivers, Policymakers, and Oracles***. Cognella Press, forthcoming in the Fall of 2016.

Dr. Isaac lives in Columbia, MO with his wife of 34 years. They have 5 grown up children and 2 grandchildren.

**Moderator Dr. Mahir J. Ibrahimov,** is the Program Manager of the US Army Culture, Regional Expertise/Language Management Office (CRELMO). He was previously the Army’s Senior Culture and Foreign Language Advisor. As the first Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Culture and Foreign Language Advisor he received the Commander’s Award for Civilian Service at Fort Sill for establishing the CFL Program there (TRADOC/CAC recognized it as the Army wide model). Mahir served in the Soviet Army and witnessed the break-up of the Soviet Union. He has served as a Chief Expert of the USSR League of Scientific/Industrial Associations and was a Senior Middle East Expert of the USSR Red Cross. As a former high ranking diplomat he helped to open the first embassy of Azerbaijan in Washington, D.C. Dr. I. was Vice President of the first American University in Azerbaijan and President of the non-profit U.S. Corporation on education, culture and economics. Mahir was a professor at the American University in Washington DC and served as a senior consultant for a number of American multinational companies. He instructed U.S. Diplomats in languages and cultures at the Department of State and provided vital assistance as a multi-lingual cultural adviser to U.S. forces during OIF II, he became the subject of a Defense Department newsreel, “Jack of All Languages.” It was another combat experience, which Ibrahimov has also witnessed first-hand.

Dr. Ibrahimov has been tasked to support the TRADOC directed, ARCIC led CSA tasker “Russian New Generation Warfare” Study. As part of the study he has recently traveled to Ukraine. The CRELMO Program Manager along with senior State Department representatives was invited as a keynote speaker at the Commander's Conference on 17-18 May at Fort Bragg hosted by LTG Townsend to provide insights into ISIS, and the situation in Syria and Russian policies in the Middle East and the Former USSR. This is just an example of many other previous and upcoming high level speaking engagements of Dr. Ibrahimov by name request. He’s also leading with a group of distinguished scholars a related publication project on the region.

Mahir specializes in the cultural issues, socio-economics and geopolitics of the former Soviet Republics, south-west and central Asia and the Middle East. He is the author of “Invitation to Rain: A Story of the Road Taken towards Freedom,” “Life Looking Death in the EYE…,” forthcoming book  *“*Cultural Perspectives, Geopolitics & Energy Security of Eurasia: *Is the Next Global Conflict Imminent?*” among numerous other publications including those in foreign languages.

He is fluent in five languages and versed in many cultures.

Married with one child (daughter, active duty/U.S. Army)