

## WEBINAR

### Scoping maritime crime, risks and responses in the Western Indian Ocean and the South Atlantic

#### BIOs of speakers

#### **Ms Amelia Tachie-Menson, KAIPTC (Ghana)**

Elsie Amelia Tachie-Menson is a Researcher at the Faculty of Academic Affairs and Research of the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC). She is also the Editorial Associate of the Journal of African Peace and Security (JAPS). With a solid background in Development Studies and currently pursuing a Master's in Gender, Peace, and Security, she has dedicated six years to cybersecurity and five years to Maritime Security Studies. In her role, Elsie actively engages in policy dialogues with influential institutions such as the African Union, European Union, ECOWAS, NATO, MasterCard Foundation, CamFed, and UNDP, contributing significantly to policy development and excellence in communication. Through her extensive experience, Elsie supports the development of policies and also fosters effective communication strategies that bridge the gap between research and practical application in the fields of peace, security, and governance.

#### **Benjamin Davis TRENDS (Representative in South Africa)**

Ben is an Economic Affairs Expert, based in Abu Dhabi and Stellenbosch. He also heads up TRENDS in South Africa. Ben has a consulting and business commercialization background for S&P500 corporates, regional businesses and start-ups grappling with launching and operating new business lines in Emerging Markets across Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, South and South East Asia. Ben has practical experience in the use of new technologies (AI, cloud hosting, scalable database platforms and IoT), research and development techniques and ways of work to commercialise new businesses across Financial Services, Telecoms, Energy (New and Old) and FMCG. As a side hustle, he Chairs a clean energy start-up spun out of Stellenbosch University. He holds an undergraduate degree in Politics, Philosophy and Economics from University of Cape Town and a Masters in Economics from Stellenbosch University.

## **Rodrigo Contreras UNODC Global Maritime Crime Programme**

### **Maritime Law Enforcement Planning Officer**

A highly decorated Colombian Marine Corps Colonel (retired), with a distinguished career commanding military units at different levels with wide experience in Special Operations, Maritime Law Enforcement Operations, and working in the topmost echelons of national strategy in Colombia. He holds a master's degree in Counter Terrorism, awarded with an honor thesis at the US National Defence University in Washington, D.C., US, and a distinguished thesis in a Senior Program at the Chinese People's Liberation Army National Défense University in Beijing, China. He has participated in senior military trainings in Colombia, China, Spain, and the United States; possesses a profound expertise in researching, designing, planning, monitoring, and evaluating National Strategies and Programs. Since 2018, he serves as a Senior Strategic Advisor in the Middle East, East Africa, and the Indian Ocean. Since 2022, he has been working with UNODC GMCP.

## **Sara Alneyadi , TRENDS Research and Advisory (United Arab Emirates)**

Sara Alneyadi holds a Master's degree in Emirati International Relations and Diplomacy from Anwar Gargash Diplomatic Academy, and a Bachelor's degree in International Affairs from Zayed University. She accumulated practical experience in crime prevention working at the General Commander Office of Abu Dhabi Police for five years. Before joining the TRENDS team, she worked in the scientific research sector at the Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research as an assistant researcher, specializing in several prominent files, including the North Africa region and the East Asia region.

## **William S. Moreira, Captain (Ret.), D.Sc., Professor, Researcher and ST&I Advisor**

### **Brazilian Naval War College**

William S. Moreira is a professor and researcher at the Brazilian Naval War College (EGN). He holds a doctorate in Naval Sciences from the Naval Education System and another in Political Science from the Federal Fluminense University. At EGN, he serves as the advisor for science, technology, and innovation (ST&I) and teaches in the Postgraduate Programme in Maritime Studies, focusing on Policy, Management, and Logistics in ST&I within the maritime domain. From 2021 to 2023, he was a visiting professor at King's College London, at the Defence Studies Department of the School of Security Studies. He is also the coordinator of a research consortium for the project "Governance and Protection of the Blue Amazon®: Strategic, Technological, and Environmental Challenges" as part of the Pró-Defesa V programme. His most recent publication is the co-edited book "Power and the Maritime Domain: A Global Dialogue" (Routledge, 2023).

## **Professor Érico Duarte, Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil)**

Érico Duarte is an Associate Professor of Strategic Studies and International Relations at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul and a Fellow of the National Defence College, Brazil. He has held visiting positions at the US Army Heritage and Education Center, Joseph Korbel School of International Studies, University of Denver, Corbett Centre for Maritime Policy Studies at King's College, Institute for Peace

Studies and Security Policies at Hamburg University, Rui Barbosa Chair at Leiden University, and Joaquim Chissano in Mozambique. He has worked as a collaborator at the Brazilian armed forces for over 20 years. He co-edited a series of three books on South Atlantic maritime security for Palgrave.

**Professor Francois Vreÿ Emeritus Professor, Stellenbosch University (South Africa)**

Francois Vreÿ is an Emeritus Professor in Military Science with the Faculty of Military Science, Stellenbosch University. He lectured in the Strategic Studies Department of the Faculty for 21 years and holds a PhD in Futures Studies from the Stellenbosch Business School. His research focus is maritime security off Africa. He is also the research coordinator for SIGLA that does research and publications, as well as conference and commissioned research events on landward, maritime and cybersecurity governance. His latest book chapters are on maritime diplomacy in Africa (2024) and a chapter titled *South Africa: Balancing priorities and relationships in the Indian Ocean* with Mark Blaine (2025), as well as a chapter *Maritime Security in African Armed Forces*, Oxford University Press (2025).