

South America in Competition Conference

Description

Carahsoft HQ, Falls Church, VA ?? July 16 & 17 2025

The **Irregular Warfare Initiative (IWI)** and the **Special Operations Association of America (SOAA)** are proud to present the **South America in Competition Conference** on **July 16th and July 17th, 2025**. Bringing together ~200 leaders from government, academia, private industry, and media, the event will feature keynote speakers and expert panels exploring the regionâ??s role in strategic competition. Topics will include the influence of alliances and non-state actors, threats to the U.S. homeland and emerging technologies, the SOFâ??Spaceâ??Cyber triad, critical minerals and supply chain resilience, economic statecraft and democratic backsliding, and the evolving landscape of information operations and open-source intelligence.

This conference aims to foster interagency collaboration across the Departments of Defense, State, Treasury, Commerce, Congress, and private sector leaders. Government and industry participants will have dedicated networking opportunities, and attendees will experience live demonstrations of cutting-edge technologies by sponsors.

The event will culminate in an invitation-only South America-focused crisis simulation, offering select participants a unique opportunity to model integrated responses to adversarial escalation and build cross-sector relationships critical to advancing U.S. objectives in the Western Hemisphere.

Who Should Attend:

- Journalists and media professionals covering defense, geopolitics, and economic statecraft
- U.S. government officials and interagency professionals involved in national security and policy
- Senior military and defense leaders
- Industry stakeholders across defense, finance, and critical infrastructure sectors
- Academic researchers and scholars focused on security, strategy, and international affairs

[Register Here](#)

ABOUT US

The **Irregular Warfare Initiative (IWI)** is a non-profit organization working to bridge the gap between scholars, practitioners, and policymakers engaged in the study and practice of irregular warfare. Through a mix of publications, podcasts, and events, IWI fosters dialogue on gray zone conflict, information warfare, proxy competition, and other forms of conflict that fall below the threshold of conventional war. By connecting academic research with operational insights, IWI helps prepare today's thought leaders for the complex challenges of the modern national security environment and strategic competition.

The **Special Operations Association of America (SOAA)** is a nonprofit organization dedicated to advocating for the interests of the U.S. special operations community. SOAA works to ensure that current and former special operations personnel receive the support, resources, and recognition they have earned. The organization also engages directly with Congress, the Department of Defense, and other stakeholders on national security issues that affect the special operations enterprise. SOAA promotes public understanding of special operations through strategic communications, veteran engagement, and partnerships with industry and academia.

SPEAKERS

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REAR ADMIRAL MARK A. SCHAFER

Commander, Special Operations Command â?? South

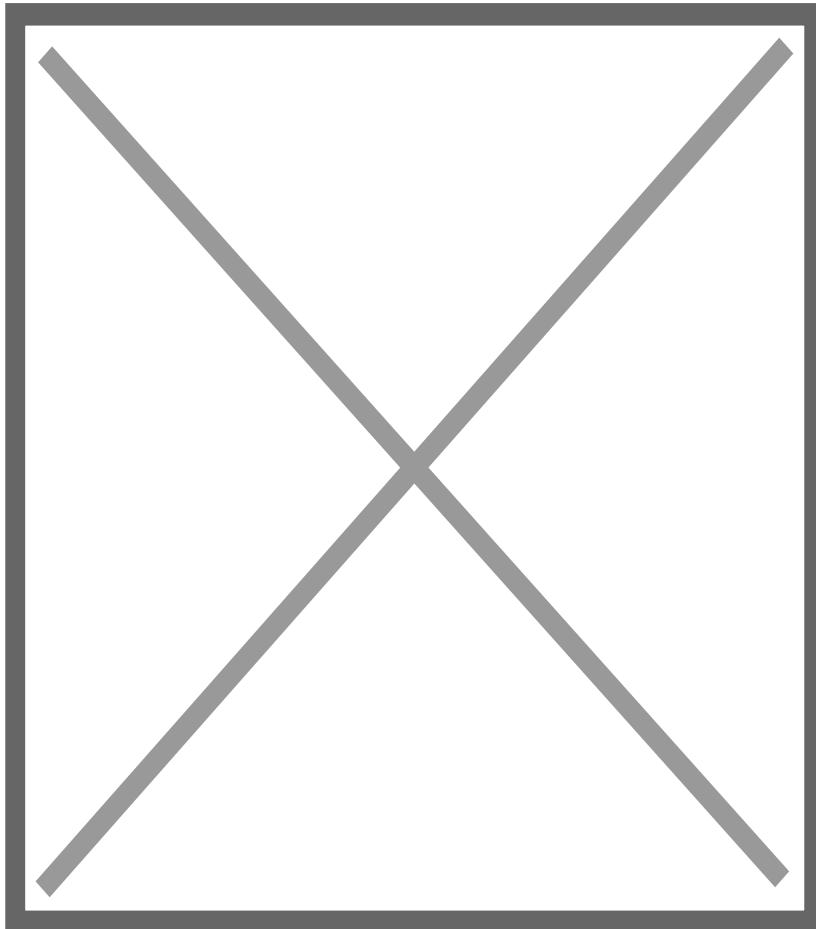
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MAJ. GEN. (RET) LINDER

Former Chief of Staff at U.S. Special Operations Command

[READ BIO](#)



THERESA WHELAN

Director for Defense Intelligence Collections and Special Programs

[READ BIO](#)

AGENDA

July 16th

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0730- Registration and Coffee
0830

0830- Welcome and Overview
0840 â?? Umar Ahmed Badami, Conference Director

Opening Remarks
0840- â?? Craig Abod, CEO, Carahsoft

0900 â?? Senior Leadership, Irregular Warfare Initiative
â?? Senior Leadership, Special Operations Association of America

0900- Keynote Address: RADM Mark Schafer on the Importance of South America in Competition
0920

Panel Discussion: Emerging Technologies and Threats to the Homeland
Moderator: TBA

0930- Panelists:
1020 â?? Dr. Evan Ellis, Research Professor, U.S. Army War College
â?? Lino Miani, Managing Director, Aero-Eye

Panel Discussion: Economic Warfare and Supply Chains
Moderator: Dr. Erin McFee, President, Corioli Institute

1030- Panelists:
1120 â?? Leland Lazarus, Term Member, Council on Foreign Relations
â?? Catherine Woods, Associate Managing Director, Institute for Financial Integrity
â?? Hunter Stires, Maritime Strategist to the Secretary of the Navy

1130- Fireside Chat with Maj Gen James Linder and Doug Livermore
1230

1230- Catered Lunch
1320

1320- Roundtable Discussion: Operations-Intel Fusion
1420

	Panel Discussion: SOF-Space-Cyber Triad
1430-1520	Moderator: Guido Torres, Executive Director, Irregular Warfare Initiative
	Panelists: â?? Rear Adm. (ret.) Robert Wright, United States Space Command â?? Dr. Doug Kraft, National Security Agency
	Panel Discussion: Adversary Networks and Open-Source Intelligence
1530-1620	Moderator: David Cook, Executive Director, Special Operations Association of America
	Panelists: â?? Dr. Ryan Berg, Director of the Americas Program, Center for Strategic and International Studies
1620-1640	Reflections and Look Ahead â?? Umar Ahmed Badami, Conference Director
1700-1800	Technology Demos and Social Hour

July 17th

0730-0800	Registration and Coffee
	Welcome
0800-0820	â?? Umar Ahmed Badami, Head of Wargaming, Irregular Warfare Initiative â?? Guido Torres, Executive Director, Irregular Warfare Initiative
0830-0900	Keynote (DOD)
0900-0930	Crisis Simulation Briefing -Umar Ahmed Badami, Head of Wargaming, Irregular Warfare Initiative
0930-1200	Crisis Simulation
1200-1300	Working Lunch
1300-1600	Crisis Simulation Debriefing and Closing Remarks
1600-1700	â?? Umar Ahmed Badami, Head of Wargaming, Irregular Warfare Initiative â?? Guido Torres, Executive Director, Irregular Warfare Initiative
1700-1800	Social Hour

SPONSORS

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DIRECTIONS

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Date Created

2025/06/07