CRELMO panel discussion (12 Sep2017)

"Cultural and Regional Implications of Russian Power Projection in the "Grey Zone."

 (Dr. Hernandez’s introduction of speakers (draft)

Thank you Sir!

Good Afternoon everybody, and thank you for joining us today!

My name is Prisco Hernandez. I will be moderating today’s session.

Before we proceed with the panel, I would like to introduce our distinqished speakers.

**Brigadier General Peter Zwack USA (Ret.),**  isaFormer U.S. Senior Defense Official and Attache to the Russian Federation from 2012 – 2014. By interacting with Russians at multiple levels since 1989, including defense, security, academia, policy, veterans, and private citizens, BG Zwack developed a unique hands-on perspective on Russia and Eurasian security affairs during a turbulent period that included the recent strife in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine. He subsequently served 34 years as a Military Intelligence and Eurasian Foreign Area Officer serving in diverse and challenging duty and deployment locations including Afghanistan, Kosovo, Russia, South Korea and West Germany. Inducted into the OCS Hall of Fame in 2015, BG Zwack is a recipient of the Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Defense Superior Service Medal, and many other awards and citations including the Afghan Service Medal and

NATO/Kosovo Medal. He was also honored as the Joint Chief's of Staff "Action Officer of the Year" for 1999. He proudly wears the Ranger Tab and Airborne Wings.

BG Zwack speaks Russian, German, Italian, and some French.

**Dr. Bob Baumann,**  is Director of Graduate Degree Programs at CGSC. He has recently returned to the College from a one-year assignment as an educational adviser to the Ministry of Defense in Uzbekistan. While in Tashkent he served as a full-time faculty member at the Armed Forces Academy of Uzbekistan and contributed to a book on military education published by the academy. Dr. Baumann is an expert in Russian and Eurasian affairs and for nineteen years taught as a member of the Department of Military History. Dr. Baumann is the author of Russian and Soviet Unconventional Wars in the Caucasus, Central Asia and Afghanistan and has published numerous articles and chapters concerning Russian military history. He has also co-authored several books on stability and peacekeeping operations in Haiti, Bosnia and Somalia. Dr. Baumann worked and travelled extensively inside the former Soviet Union, having spent extended periods conducting graduate and post-doctoral research at the Moscow and Leningrad State Universities. Since the dissolution of the USSR, he has made many research trips to Russia and other parts of the post-Soviet space.

**Dr. Mahir J. Ibrahimov,** is Director of the US Army Culture, Regional Expertise/Language Management Office (CRELMO). Mahir served in the Soviet Army and witnessed the break-up of the Soviet Union. He was 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 senior diplomat he helped to open the first embassy of Azerbaijan in Washington, D.C. Mahir specializes in cultural issues, socio-economics and geopolitics of Russia and Eurasia, south-west and central Asia and the Middle East. He is fluent in five languages and versed in many cultures. Dr. Ibrahimov instructed US diplomats in languages and cultures at the Department of State and provided vital assistance as a multi-lingual cultural adviser to US forces during OIF II.

He is the author of “Invitation to Rain: A Story of the Road Taken towards Freedom,” “Life Looking Death in the EYE…,” *“*Cultural Perspectives, Geopolitics & Energy Security of Eurasia: *Is the Next Global Conflict Imminent?*” among numerous other publications including those in foreign languages.

Each of the speakers will provide initial remarks for about 5-7 minutes: the event is from 13:30 to 15:30 (CST).

The rest of the time will be devoted to questions, answers and comments session which will follow by the Moderator/CRELMO concluding/summarizing the event- between 15:20-1530

(CST).

Without further ado I would like to yield the floor to our panel

**General Zwack, the floor is yours.**

**Thank you**