

New Voices in National Security:  
An Innovative Format for Bringing  
Together Scholars and Practitioners  
to Exchange Knowledge and Ideas

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# My Civic Engagement Work

- Bridging the Gap (BTG) – multi-university initiative that connects scholars and practitioners on international issues
- Translating Research into Action Center (TRAC) – American University-based initiative that promotes research translation for societal impact



TRANSLATING RESEARCH  
INTO ACTION CENTER  
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY • WASHINGTON, DC

# Obstacles to Scholar-Practitioner Engagement

- Many practitioners want new knowledge but find much academic work inaccessible or irrelevant to their needs and concerns
  - If practitioners do reach out to scholars, they tend to reach out to the “usual suspects”
- Many scholars would like to engage with policy makers but don't have incentives, training, or opportunities to do so

# BTG's New Voices in National Security Program

- Brings together scholars and practitioners to share knowledge and ideas on important international issues
- Format: one-day workshops convened in partnership with policy institutions

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# New Voices in National Security Program: Workshop Process

- 1) Selection of workshop topic and institutional partner
  - Topic chosen on which practitioners need expertise and scholars can provide it
  - Partner chosen that has strong practitioner network on topic
- 2) Selection of policy-relevant questions for participants to address
  - Questions developed through conversations with practitioners
- 3) Selection of scholars who will write memos answering questions
  - Priority placed on scholars who are not already known to practitioners
- 4) Selection of practitioner participants
  - Priority placed on practitioners with important responsibilities on issue

# New Voices in National Security Program: Workshop Process

- 5) Convening of workshop
  - Scholar memos serve as jumping off point for set of moderated discussions
    - Emphasis on mutual learning between scholars and practitioners
    - Networking and relationship building encouraged
- 6) Preparation and dissemination of report highlighting workshop takeaways
- 7) Follow-up meetings and publications depending on interest and demand

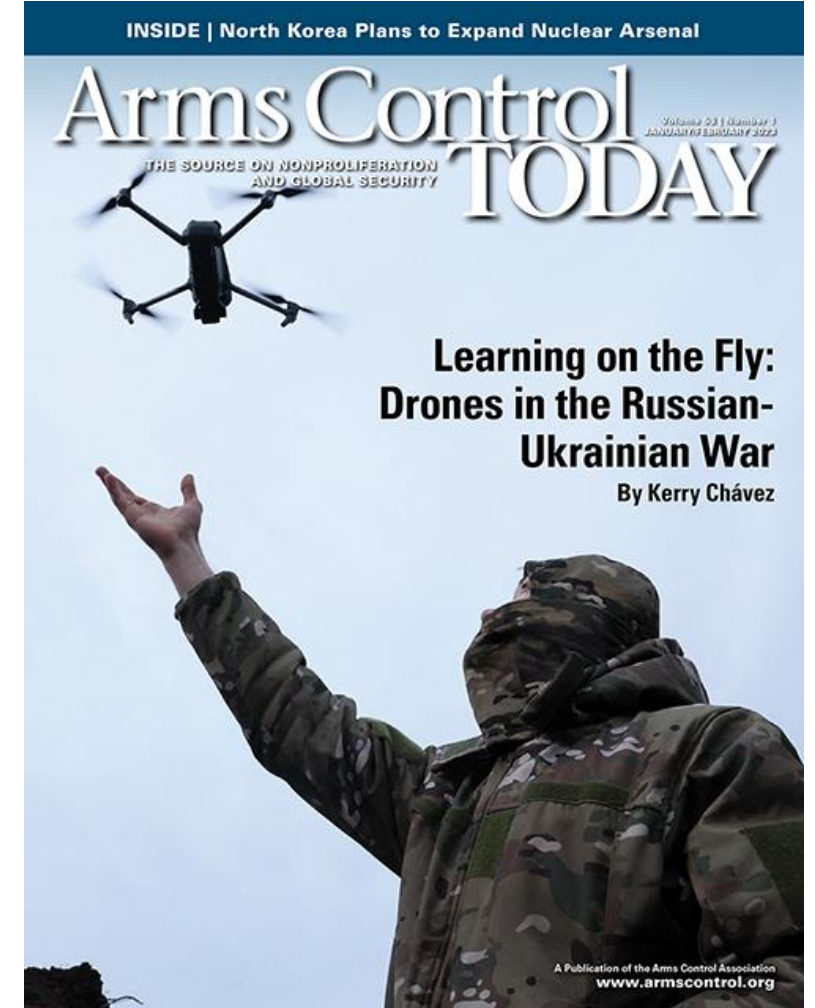
DECEMBER 2019

# Strengthening the Economic Arsenal

Bolstering the Deterrent and Signaling Effects of Sanctions

Elizabeth Rosenberg and Jordan Tama

Foreword by David S. Cohen



# Adaptability for Other Settings

- Model is easily adaptable to different settings
  - Other policy areas
    - Domestic issues
  - Other institutional contexts
    - State or local level
    - Other countries
- Practitioner identities can vary depending on topic
  - Government
  - Civil society
  - Private sector

# Lessons Learned

- Choose partner who is invested in effort
- Ensure that scholars address questions that practitioners need answered
- Ensure that scholars communicate in language that practitioners understand
- Foster workshop environment of dialogue and mutual learning
- Facilitate networking and follow-up

# Conclusions

- Focused workshops can be valuable way of fostering mutual learning between scholars and practitioners
- Workshops tend to be most useful if centered on questions that practitioners need answered and scholars can shed light on
- Model is adaptable to any policy or institutional context

# More Information

Bridging the Gap

[bridgingthegaproject.org](http://bridgingthegaproject.org)

Translating Research into Action Center

[www.american.edu/centers/trac](http://www.american.edu/centers/trac)

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