



# PRESS RELEASE

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## **UOG conference speaker to discuss risks, measures in the Indo-Pacific missile defense race**

The Indo-Pacific region stands on the cusp of a new missile age: Inventories of short- to intermediate-range surface-to-surface missile systems are quickly growing and could heighten the risks of escalation, according to geopolitics expert Ankit Panda.

While military planners and policymakers may view missile defense capabilities as essential to preserving peace and maintaining deterrence, this proliferation could intensify already complex security dilemmas, particularly related to North Korea and the Taiwan Strait, he writes.

Mr. Panda, a Stanton Senior Fellow in the Nuclear Policy Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, will discuss the drivers behind these trends and identify possible measures to address the most salient risks in his keynote speech at the 45<sup>th</sup> College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences' Annual Research Conference at UOG. The conference theme is "Pacific Futures: The Stories We Tell."

The keynote speech will be held in the CLASS Lecture Hall starting at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 7, 2024.

Mr. Panda will join fellow panelists Dr. Robert Underwood, Guam's former Delegate to the U.S. Congress and 10<sup>th</sup> President of UOG; Dr. Kenneth G. Kuper, Associate Professor of Political Science, CHamoru Studies, and Micronesia Studies at UOG; and Leland Bettis, Board Director, Pacific Center for Island Security.

“In this era of geopolitical tensions, centered around the competition between the United States and China, focal points are not just in foreign affairs and defense centers in Washington, D.C., and Beijing,” said Dr. Kuper. “As historian Greg Fry reminds us, ‘the claims of empires are often best tested in their remotest outpost.’”

With 27% of the island’s land mass currently occupied by the U.S. military, Guam disproportionately bears the weight of U.S. attempts to guarantee security.

Mr. Panda is the author of *Kim Jong Un and the Bomb: Survival and Deterrence in North Korea* and editor-at-large at the Diplomat, where he hosts the Asia Geopolitics Podcast, and a contributing editor at War on the Rocks.

View the keynote speech and panel discussion at <https://www.facebook.com/uogclass/>

**For more information about the panel and its topic, contact:**

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Photos:

Mr. Ankit Panda

Dr. Robert Underwood

Dr. Kenneth Kuper

Mr. Leland Bettis