

SHELIA RONIS

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Dr. Sheila R. Ronis is Chair and Professor of the Department of Management at Walsh College. She is also the Director of the Center for Complex and Strategic Decisions at Walsh College holding a special term appointment as a national security advisor with Argonne National Laboratory University of Chicago. Dr. Ronis is also President of The University Group, Inc., a management consulting firm, and think tank specializing in strategic management, visioning, leadership, national security and public policy. She teaches the “Strategic Management” course of the

MBA and the Master of Management Programs at Walsh. She serves as Chairman of the National Defense University Foundation Board of Directors.

Dr. Ronis served as guest speaker on the use of foresight methodologies to improve public policy on September 12, 2014 at The Royal Society in London, U.K.; she was invited by the Astronomer Royal, Sir Martin John Rees, Baron Rees of Ludlow, Kt., the former president of the Royal Society and master of Trinity College, Cambridge. Dr. Ronis, who is also director, Center for Complex and Strategic Decisions (CCSD) at Walsh, traced the Center's work on the Project for National Security Reform. It included details on how the CCSD is experimenting with judgment and decision sciences for a conceptual set of capabilities for the Executive Office of the President of the United States. On 12 June 2013, Dr. Ronis was awarded the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff's Outstanding Public Service Award in a formal ceremony in Washington, D.C. Her B.S. is in Physics, Mathematics and Education. Her M.A. and Ph.D. are from The Ohio State University in Large Social System Behavior.

Dr. Ronis is the former chair of the Vision Working Group of the Project on National Security Reform (PNSR) in Washington, D.C., which was tasked by Congress to rewrite the National Security Act of 1947. As a Distinguished Fellow at PNSR, Dr. Ronis was responsible for the plan and processes to develop The Center for Strategic Analysis and Assessment; the place where the President of the United States will conduct “grand strategy” on behalf of the nation.

Societal resilience: Lessons from Herman Kahn

This presentation will describe the Vision Working Group's efforts for the Congressionally mandated and funded Project on National Security Reform (PNSR) in the United States. Tasked with making recommendations to improve the U.S. national security system, the Vision Working Group used foresight methodologies, to test the assumptions made by the overall effort and the Project's major recommendations. The presentation will include the results of the Project and how the major recommendation by the Working Group is being prototyped.

The Vision Working Group recommended the establishment of a Center in its July 2010 Report and Scenarios to the U.S. Congress. Over a five-year period of study, it was determined that the United States' President needs a place, a process and set of capabilities, to develop and test grand strategy and policy decisions of the nation and particularly to support the national security system using foresight methodologies, especially to explore complex system behavior.

The PNSR Vision Working Group's efforts examined and utilized the legacy of Herman Kahn's thermonuclear war scenarios from the 1950's and 60's, at the Rand Corporation, and what they taught about thinking the unthinkable and preparedness, systemic relationships, interdependent elements and the complexity of systems. One major lesson was the value in exploring potential unintended consequences of people's decisions and how they affect policy-makers' dilemmas in the national security system. All nine visionarios developed to support the Project will be shared including the 15-minute "Red Death" PNSR visionario film, developed by Argonne National Laboratory, which will be included in the presentation and will precede the Q&A discussion.