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N E W S R E L E A S E

Vali Nasr

Forces of Fortune: The Rise of the New Muslim Middle Class and What It Will Mean for Our World

**Sunday, October 11 / 3:00 p.m. / Free
Victoria Hall
33 W. Victoria Street, Santa Barbara**

S U M M A R Y F A C T S

- Vali Nasr, Senior advisor to a special envoy for Afghanistan and Pakistan Ambassador Richard Holbrooke.
- Sunday, October 11 / 3:00 p.m.
- Victoria Hall, 33 West Victoria Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101
- FREE
- Courtesy of Borders, copies of his books will be available for purchase and signing at this event.
- Information: Walter H. Capps Center for the Study of Ethics, Religion, and Public Life at UCSB (805) 893-2317

Description:

Vali Nasr, Senior advisor to special envoy for Afghanistan and Pakistan Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, will discuss his just-released book, *Forces of Fortune: The Rise of the New Muslim Middle Class and What It Will Mean for Our World*.

Speaker Profile:

Born in Iran, Vali Nasr is a professor of international politics at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy of Tufts University and an adjunct senior fellow for Middle Eastern studies at the Council on Foreign Relations, as well as a senior fellow of The Dubai Initiative run by Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government.

Vali Nasr's bestselling *The Shia Revival* utterly transformed the debate about the Iraq War by explaining why sectarian violence had broken out there. Now again, with his new book *Forces of Fortune: The Rise of the New Muslim Middle Class and What It Will Mean for Our World* (September 2009; Free Press) the renowned Middle East expert – tapped by special envoy to the region Richard Holbrooke as a senior advisor – will dramatically reshape the debate about how to contend with the deeply troubling challenges in the Middle East. Nasr offers a profoundly original, paradigm-changing analysis of why extremism has become such a problem, how stability can evolve in the region, how US relations with the region can be dramatically improved, and how extremism can be defeated. A main theme of *Forces of Fortune* is that the great battle for the soul of Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and the entire region will be fought not over religion, but over business and capitalism.

With a deft combination of historical narrative and eye-opening contemporary on-the-ground reporting, Nasr reveals that a vast tidal force of change is swelling up in the Middle East – an upwardly-mobile middle class of entrepreneurs, investors, professionals and consumers clamoring for the trappings of modern life, who have been almost invisible to the West and who are the key to tipping the scales of power away from extremist belligerence. Offering a powerful reassessment of why extremism and anti-Americanism took hold in the region – *not* because of an inevitable “clash of cultures” or the nature of Islam, but because of the failure of this kind of authentic middle class to develop in the 19th and 20th centuries – he shows that these devoutly Islamic yet highly modern Muslims of what he calls the “critical middle” – in Iran, Pakistan, Turkey, and the stealth force behind the extraordinary growth of aggressively capitalist Dubai – are finally the middle class the region has desperately needed. They are building a whole new “Muslim world economy” – as middle classes did in both India and China. They and their distinctive blending of Islam and capitalism are the key to bringing about lasting reform and to defeating fundamentalism; they are people in the region the West can and *must* do business with.

Professor and Chair of Research, Department of National Security Affairs, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey (2003-2007); Senior Fellow Belfer Center, Harvard University (2006-present); Adjunct Senior Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations (2006-2007); Director, Islamic Educational Reform in South Asia Project of the National Bureau of Asian Research (2005-2007); Has taught at University of San Diego, University of California, San Diego, Stanford and Tufts. Honors and Fellowships include: Carnegie Scholar (2006); Life Member, Council on Foreign Relations (2005-present); John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation award (2000); and Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation award (1996). Has advised the U.S. President, Vice-President, Secretaries

of State and Defense (2006); National Security Council (2006) and Deputy Secretary of State (2006); testified before Congress; served as Co-Director, Iran Policy Forum, U.S. Institute of Peace (2006-2007); member of Board of Trustees of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund (2007-present); member of Academic Council of Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, Georgetown University (2006-present); member of Board of Trustees of The Foundation for Iranian Studies (2003-present), and member of Advisory Committee, Faris Center of Eastern Mediterranean Studies, Tufts University (2001-Present).

Sponsors:

This free, public event is presented by the Walter H. Capps Center for the Study of Ethics, Religion, and Public Life at UCSB and cosponsored by the UCSB Center for Middle East Studies. Courtesy of Borders, copies of his books will be available for purchase and signing.

**For more information, call
UCSB Walter H. Capps Center for the
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at (805) 893-2317**

**Editor: For color images,
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