



Frank Gardner

JOURNALIST

Boards are being asked to make capital, supply chain and people decisions against a threat map that now includes state conflict, proxy terrorism, cyber and energy shocks in parallel. The intelligence that used to sit with governments is now a commercial risk input, and most executive teams are not wired to read it. The gap is between headline awareness and a working view of what a given event means for this business, this quarter.

Frank Gardner is the BBC's Security Correspondent and an authority on terrorism, the Middle East and global security risk, helping leaders understand how live geopolitical events translate into operational, reputational and strategic exposure.

Frank Gardner's 2026 Biography

Why organisations work with Frank Gardner

- Direct line into the security and intelligence conversation. Gardner is the BBC's Security Correspondent, with three decades of sourced reporting across the Middle East, counter-terrorism and state conflict, and he brings that network into the room.
- Arabic fluency and a degree in Arabic and Islamic Studies give him a reading of the region that most Western commentators cannot match, particularly on Gulf politics, jihadist movements and Iran.
- First-hand authority on the personal cost of political violence. He was shot six times by al-Qaeda gunmen in Riyadh in 2004 and returned to full-time reporting in 2005; when he speaks about risk, resilience and continuing to operate, it is from lived experience.
- A published thriller novelist whose Luke Carlton series (Crisis, Ultimatum, Outbreak, Invasion, Ballistic, published by Bantam and Penguin) is built on real tradecraft, which makes him unusually effective at making intelligence work comprehensible to non-specialist audiences.
- Credibility signals that serious buyers recognise: OBE for services to journalism, Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, honorary doctorates from five UK universities, the McWhirter Award for Bravery, Spain's El Mundo Prize and the UAE's Zayed Medal.

Biography highlights

- BBC Security Correspondent; previously the BBC's first full-time Gulf correspondent (1997) and BBC Middle East correspondent based in Cairo (from 1999).
- Author of Blood and Sand (Bantam, 2006), a Sunday Times top-three

AVAILABLE FOR

- After Dinner Engagement
- Speaking

FRANK'S SPEAKING THEMES

- Business Continuity and Crisis Management
- Geopolitics
- Political Risk & Policy
- Resilience & Stress Management
- Risk Management
- Scenario Planning & Strategic Foresight

LANGUAGES: English, French, Turkish

bestseller covering 25 years of reporting from the Middle East, and Far Horizons.

- Author of the Luke Carlton thriller series, featuring a former SBS officer turned MI6 operative: *Crisis*, *Ultimatum*, *Outbreak*, *Invasion* and *Ballistic*, published by Bantam and Penguin.
- Shot and seriously wounded by al-Qaeda gunmen in Riyadh in 2004; returned to full-time BBC reporting in 2005.
- OBE (2005) for services to journalism. Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society.
- Honorary doctorates of law from the University of Nottingham, Staffordshire University, the University of Exeter, the University of East Anglia and the Open University.
- Awards: McWhirter Award for Bravery, El Mundo Prize for International Journalism (Spain), Zayed Medal for Journalism (UAE), UK Press Gazette Person of the Year.

Biography

The security environment that boards now have to plan against, terrorism, state conflict, energy disruption, cyber, looks less like a set of discrete issues and more like a single interconnected risk map. Reading that map is the work. For nearly three decades, Frank Gardner has done it in public, on air, for the BBC.

As the BBC's Security Correspondent, he has covered the War on Terror since 2002, having previously served as the corporation's first full-time Gulf correspondent and then as Middle East correspondent based in Cairo. A fluent Arabic speaker with a degree in Arabic and Islamic Studies, he reports from inside the region rather than about it, with sourcing across security services, militaries and political leadership.

That authority was sharpened by events. In June 2004, reporting from the Al-Suwaidi district of Riyadh, he was shot six times by al-Qaeda gunmen; his colleague, cameraman Simon Cumbers, was killed. After fourteen operations and seven months in hospital, Gardner returned to full-time BBC reporting in 2005 and has covered every major terrorism and security story since. He was appointed OBE that year for services to journalism.

His published work tracks the same terrain from two angles. *Blood and Sand*, a Sunday Times top-three bestseller, is the non-fiction record of a reporting career built in the Middle East. The Luke Carlton thrillers, *Crisis*, *Ultimatum*, *Outbreak*, *Invasion* and *Ballistic*, use the mechanics of real intelligence tradecraft to dramatise the threats he covers on air, and have made him one of the few security commentators equally at home briefing a board and a mass readership.

Key speaking topics

- Geopolitical and security risk
- Terrorism and counter-terrorism
- The Middle East and the Gulf
- Intelligence, espionage and tradecraft
- Iran, Saudi Arabia and Gulf politics
- Resilience after serious adversity
- Global risk and business decision-making

Ideal for

- Boards and executive committees setting strategy against geopolitical

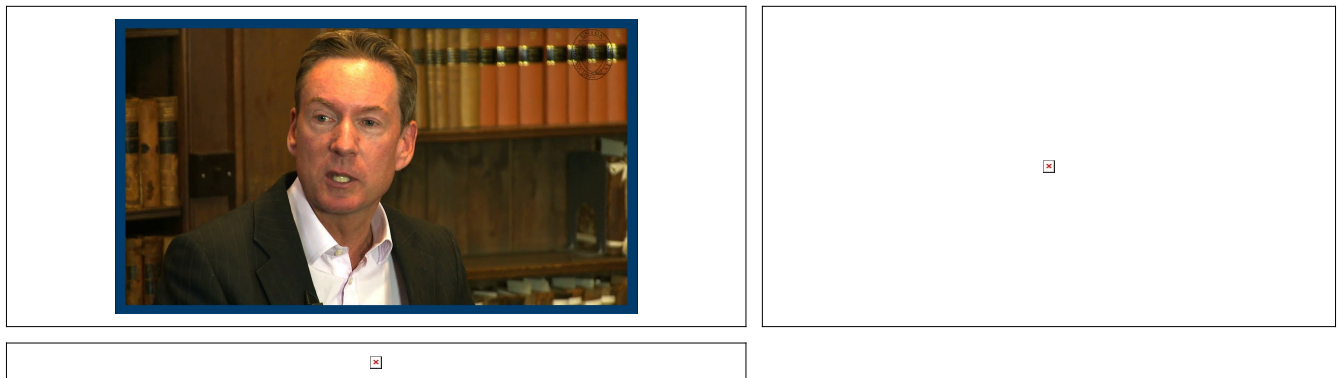
and security exposure

- Chief Risk Officers, Chief Security Officers and Heads of Corporate Security
- Leadership teams in energy, financial services, defence, aviation and critical infrastructure with Middle East or Gulf operations
- Annual conferences, client events and internal leadership offsites where a credible read of the threat landscape is the main ask

Audience outcomes

- A working read of the current geopolitical and terrorism threat map, not a headline recap
- Sharper understanding of Middle East and Gulf dynamics, including Iran, Saudi Arabia and jihadist movements, from someone who reports the region in Arabic
- A sense of how intelligence services actually work, and what that means for corporate security, travel risk and crisis response
- A human account of surviving a near-fatal attack and continuing to operate at the top of a demanding profession

Frank Gardner's Videos



What Frank Gardner's clients say

Review for his book 'Blood and Sand': Gardner is a superb reporter; his terrible experience only make his analysis all the more telling.

Evening Standard

Review for his book 'Blood and Sand': Chilling, graphic and admirably unsentimental... Gardner comes across as a modest, thoroughly decent man... an exemplary foreign correspondent.

Guardian

Review for his book 'Blood and Sand': Gardner tells his remarkable tale well and bravely, with an astonishing lack of anger and enduring love and respect for the Islamic world.

Sunday Times

Review for his book 'Blood and Sand': A witty, self-deprecating, inspiring testament.

Daily Telegraph