



**VOLUME 3**

***2016-2017 CIVIL AFFAIRS ISSUE PAPERS:***  
**LEVERAGING CIVIL AFFAIRS**

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Edited by  
Christopher Holshek

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**Leveraging Civil Affairs**

**Presented by the  
Civil Affairs Association**

**Edited by  
Christopher Holshek**

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## FOREWORD

For three years now, the Civil Affairs Association and its partners have provided the Civil Affairs Regiment a way to provide experience-based feedback and advice to institutional and policy level leadership on the future of the Civil Affairs force through an annual fall symposium. These symposia result in *Civil Affairs Issue Papers* published and presented at the spring roundtable.

With every successive year, the discussion has become increasingly impactful, improving the Regiment as a learning organization by advancing a unified, whole of CA force view of professional and force development discussion using this unofficial, collegial platform.

The 2016 Symposium on “Leveraging Civil Affairs” featured a workshop, led by the International Peace & Security Institute (IPSI), to refine the understanding of what Civil Affairs’ most important customers – the Geographic Combatant, Service Component, and Joint Force Commands in each region of the world – should expect CA to contribute to their missions.

In turn, this informs CA on what it should be ready to deliver, regardless of source component or service or level of employment – in order to help “prevent, shape, and win” the conflicts of the future.

The workshop built upon Lt. Gen. H.R. McMaster’s 2015 Symposium challenge to the CA Regiment to contribute to the discussion of the future force through the Army Warfighting Challenges. This discussion was motivated by the general recognition of CA’s longstanding role as more than a critical “force multiplier” or tactical “enabler” in decisive action.

Additionally, it drew on the appreciation of CA as a national strategic capability to consolidate military into political gains by facilitating post-conflict transition from war to peace and from military to civilian lead. More recently, there has been greater recognition of CA's emerging ability to engage a multitude of partners to shape, influence, and stabilize the "human geography" (as the Army calls it) and thus contribute as well to conflict prevention and mitigation across the full range of operations.

The Symposium concluded that CA can do so only when appropriately leveraged by regional and operational commanders who understand the strategic value of CA even at the tactical level.

The resulting discussion was so rich and substantive we have included an in-depth report with a list of recommendations on issues related to CA force development and integration, accompanying this year's *Civil Affairs Issue Papers*.

It by no means represents a complete consensus; however, we see it as a first and not last word on what we hope will become a CA whole-of-force dialogue to promote changes to policy, doctrine, and other determinants shaping CA force development.

The Association, IPSI, the U.S. Army Peacekeeping & Stability Operations Institute, and their partners will continue support this learning process for Civil Affairs. Our thanks go out in particular to Christopher Holshek and Kevin Melton for preparing the Symposium report, the writers of this year's issue

papers, and to many others, Maj. Gen. (ret.) Michael Kuehr, Brig. Gen. (ret.) Bruce Bingham, Col. (ret.) Larry Rubini, as well as those mentioned and unmentioned for their contributions to this effort.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Christopher Holshek**

Civil Affairs is increasingly understood as a national strategic capability to consolidate military into political gains during and from decisive action and in transition from war to peace and from military to civilian lead, as well as to engage partners and other players in the “human geography” to effectively contribute to national interests and policy objectives.

However, CA can only do this when appropriately leveraged through geographic combatant and service component commands, where they can help plan and conduct CA support to decisive action, irregular warfare (IW), and peace and stability operations (P&SO), support humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations, counter violent extremism, and perform security cooperation and assistance. CA is the Joint force of choice to work with many civilian agency, non-governmental, civil society, and private sector actors whose capacities best mitigate drivers of conflict and instability and promote peace.

But there needs to be better, multi-component understanding within and between the Civil Affairs Regiment and its military customers and Civilian Unified Action Partners (CIVUAPs) on what they can reasonably expect CA to contribute to their missions. In turn, CA needs to communicate what it can deliver – regardless of component, service, or level of action – in order to prevent, shape, and win in the emerging peace and security environment.

With this in mind, the 2016 Civil Affairs Symposium on “Leveraging Civil Affairs” featured a workshop to survey policy and doctrine, lessons, professional research, and professional testimony to identify

core CA competencies and capabilities. Identifying these is necessary to support full-range operations of the geographic combatant and service component commands (GCCs/SCCs) and to capture and discuss thoughts on how to develop and deploy these capabilities across the joint, interorganizational, and multinational (JIM) environment at especially those leadership and managerial levels.

The Symposium's intent was to provide a more comprehensive view of CA and its employment at GCCs/SCCs, functional commands such as Special Operations Command (SOCOM), and in Joint Force Commands (JFCs). To do this, the Symposium sought input from the CA Regiment's community of practice to the institutional processes of CA force development at all levels and from all sources, whether that be Army Special Operations Forces (SOF), General Purpose Forces (GPF), Active or Reserve Component (AC or RC), and of course Marine CA forces.

Drawing from the insights of the most operationally experienced CA force in decades, this unofficial report – beyond capturing the rich discussion from many contributors – aims to galvanize broader discussion of the future of CA at upcoming CA symposia and roundtables, and in *Civil Affairs Issue Papers*, and promote dialogue between communities of policy and practice with regard to CA. It is therefore a first and not last word in this whole-of-force discussion.

Questions posed at the Symposium included: How can commands best use CA's capabilities to facilitate desired outcomes? What CA capabilities do the commands need and how can CA forces be best developed and maintained? What policy, legal, institutional, organizational, program, funding and other resource issues encumber CA effectiveness as such and how can they be best addressed?

As facilitator, the International Peace & Security Institute (IPSI) captured the workshop's outputs, recording suggestions on how CA can be effective and so better contribute to implementing national security strategies. Observations also drew from a survey of policy and doctrine, operational lessons, research, and testimony from nearly 80 participants involved in scenario-based simulations and group brief-backs to tease out key findings.

The second day's panel discussion began with an IPSI-led brief-back on the previous day's findings. The discussants, representatives from the U.S. Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command (Airborne), or USACAPOC(A), U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare School and Center (USA-JFKSWCS), the proposed U.S. Army Institute for Military Support to Governance (IMSG), U.S. Army Peacekeeping & Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI), U.S. Army South, and U.S. Marine Corps 2<sup>nd</sup> Civil Affairs Group, reviewed these challenges and entertained solutions to them. From this rich discussion and the issue papers presented at the Symposium, IPSI and the Association then gathered recommendations on doctrine, organization, training, material, leadership and education, personnel, and facilities, as well as policy (DOTMLPF-P), and further reviewed and refined this unofficial report.

A salient point was the importance of a strong working relationship between CA Commands and SCCs within the GCC/SCC/JFC structure - the key military customer for Civil Affairs - as illustrated by the unique operational command (OPCON) relationship between the hosting 351st Civil Affairs Command and the U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM). The commands request both Marine and Army CA, ser-

vices, funding, and employing CA in the region. Gen. Vincent K. Brooks, Commander, United States Forces Korea, made a similar point in his keynote remarks. As United Nations (UN) and Republic of Korea (RoK)-U.S. Combined Forces Commander, he urged CA commands to more creatively apply legal and policy frameworks to enable a more robust CA presence, especially RC CA, to enhance planning, interoperability and training for both SOF and GPF CA. He looked forward to a time when authorities and budgetary mechanisms for leveraging RC CA for missions other than exercises and named operations are finally updated.

Another observation was the absence of a DoD-level with executive authority specifically for Civil Affairs or civil-military operations (CMO), either in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Joint Staff, or Army Staff. Sponsorship as such lies with the Assistance Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict (ASD SO/LIC), with Defense-level institutional support from PKSOI as the Joint and Army proponent for P&SO. In addition to the low number of CA planners at theater and operational commands is the paucity of CMO directorates among the Army and Joint Staff in the Pentagon. While the tactical capability of the CA force is robust, well established and understood, and well supported in policy, training, and doctrine, the same cannot be said for CA at the operational, regional strategic, and national strategic levels.

Also strongly noted was the need for the CA Regiment, in a more intense JIM environment, to reach out to civilian partners rather than waiting for civilians to come to them, in order to foster steady-state engagement resulting in vital strategic and operational capi-

tal from which to draw during crises – itself a form of strategic and operational readiness. The workshop also recommended that both communities be better educated about the other – especially through mobile CA training teams with a train-the-trainer mission approach.

Conflicts over the last two decades have led to an increased demand for deployable CA capabilities in support of operational and tactical commands. CA provides a critical asset to Army Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs) and Joint Task Force (JTF) commands to win the people-centric fight. CA fills a critical gap in IW and P&SO. This reinforcing lesson has resulted in emphasis on growing CA capability at CA battalion versus CA brigade or command (CACOM) levels, including functional specialty capabilities and Civil Affairs Planning Teams (CAPTs). With USACAPOC(A) reporting over 75% of its personnel supporting BCTs, all Marine Civil Affairs Groups aimed at the tactical level, and a large portion of SOF CA dedicated to support operational task forces and Theater Special Operations Commands (TSOCs), the vast majority of the effort and resources of the total CA force continue to support individual and small team readiness.

Scant attention has gone to the need for CA in GCC/SCC mission planning that ties together all the elements of national power (diplomatic, information, military, economic, financial, intelligence, and law enforcement) that the Joint Force needs to respond to complex crises, address the drivers of conflict, and achieve sustainable political outcomes. CA forces help integrate the efforts of multiple partners as well as mitigate or defeat threats to civil society by engaging and influencing the civil populace and authorities and conducting responsibilities normally performed by

civil government across the range of military operations across the full range of operations - not just during decisive action.

The focus on tactical CA - and misinterpretation of Civil Affairs Operations (CAO), a CA mission, as synonymous to CMO, a Joint Force and Service mission - has contributed to the neglect of strategic and operational CA capabilities. Moreover, that focus has reinforced a disintegrated, SOF-centric and tactical mindset for CA that tends to view it as only a force multiplier or enabler to decisive operations or in support of SOCOM program objectives, to the detriment of its conflict management and engagement roles - on behalf of the Joint Force as well as the Army - even at tactical levels.

There has been little investment in strategic and operational CA since 9/11. Discussed for years, USA-JFKSWCS - the CA "schoolhouse" - has yet to field an advanced course on operational and strategic level CAO to generate CA planners adept at understanding and integrating non-military considerations at critical levels of political-military and civil-military integration at theater and operational level commands. Functional specialists, in turn, have fallen out of favor due to the increased ability of CIVUAPs to perform many of their tasks, complacency from the prior abundance of public administration and infrastructure backgrounds from Eastern Europe, and mismanagement of an oversold product less clearly connected to strategic outcomes. All of this and more led to the creation of the IMSG to recover and reinvent what was once a Civil Affairs strong suit from the "Monuments Men" era.

Moreover, the ability of the total CA force to lead theater-strategic and operational CAO in support of

CMO necessary to more holistic responses to drivers of conflict and instability is now a critical force limitation. There was wide consensus at the Symposium that incorporating CA early in planning can positively influence the consolidation of military into political gains and effectively synchronize military with CIVUAP capacities.

Additionally, senior CA officers and NCOs in both the AC and RC have been cut, eroding capability to provide appropriate CA personnel to the Army and Joint commands in key staff positions from the operational to the Department of the Army and GCC/SCC/JFC staffs, especially in partnership directorates. CA, by its nature, is the go-to Joint Force capability to foster interagency, intergovernmental and private sector partnership for joint planning and operations essential to success in the JIM environment.

Finally, the revised “elevator speech” on Civil Affairs that will encase the new narrative has much to draw upon, including the Army Concept for Civil Affairs which sees CA as “the lead Department of Defense human geography capability to engage civil societies and agencies by applying unique knowledge, skills, and abilities that promote unified action.” CA forces, the draft went on, “are selected, trained, organized, and equipped to support, influence, compel, or control populations, governments, and other institutions in the future operational environment, to achieve national objectives.”

This unofficial report was presented and discussed, along with the *2016-17 Civil Affairs Issue Papers* in this volume, at the Civil Affairs Roundtable hosted by the National Defense University Center for Complex Operations in Washington, D.C. on the 4<sup>th</sup> of April 2017.



*Col. (ret.) Christopher Holshek, a Program Director in the Civil Affairs Association, is co-organizer of the Symposia and Roundtables and co-edits the Civil Affairs Issue Papers. His book, Travels with Harley – Journeys in Search of Personal and National Identity, reflects his experiences and insights gained from three decades in Civil Affairs at all levels and across the full range of operations in the JIM environment.*

## SYMPOSIUM WORKSHOP REPORT

Kevin Melton and Christopher Holshek

**“Leveraging Civil Affairs for Full-Range Operations by Theater and Service Commands in the Joint, Interorganizational, and Multinational Environment”**

### 1. Key Findings

The following captures the key findings of the workshop discussion from the 2016 Civil Affairs Symposium and from further interaction with many stakeholders in the development of this unofficial report. It does not represent a complete consensus of the CA Regiment, but aims to galvanize a more comprehensive discussion of the future of the CA force.

#### a. A Strategic Capability for a Strategic Challenge

Dr. Karen Guttieri, Professor of National Security Studies at the Air University, opened up with an historical perspective, emphasizing that CA’s legacy of working mostly in the spaces between war and peace, civil and military, etc., has even more relevance in today’s wider, complex, ambiguous, and dynamic peace and security environment. IPSI Senior Advisor Kevin Melton added that this environment – and particularly Guttieri’s “spaces between” – is shared by humanitarian, security, and peacebuilding organizations. “What do SOCOM, the United Nations World Food Program, and Doctors without Borders all have in common?” posed first-place issue paper authors Karlsson and Karlson. “Last year, all three operated in essentially the same seventy countries.”

Melton and others remarked, however, that there was as much continuity as change in the understanding of war and peace, remembering Lt. Gen. H.R. McMaster's 2015 Symposium keynote (summarized in the 2015-16 *Civil Affairs Issue Papers*) and his *Continuity and Change: The Army Operating Concept and Clear Thinking about Future War*, in which he described war as essentially political, human, and uncertain – and thus the key role Civil Affairs plays in managing those determinants. The rapid rise in inter-connective information technology, the humanization of security, and the stresses of resource scarcity are provoking the transformation of a world previously defined by outdated and illegitimate political boundaries and systems. Both the causes and cures to conflict and security lie increasingly outside the realm of state-sponsored military forces.

As Saiddudin and Schafer noted in their issue paper, “these changes are characterized by complexity and non-linear systems, where adapting to these new challenges is beyond the capability of traditional linear military structures... based on rigid, top down hierarchy and transparent doctrine, which obfuscates winning wars in these complex systems.” The enduring wars of today are predominantly wars of influence, their centers of gravity as well as decisive capacities lying increasingly outside the realm of military forces and more in the realm of civil society. The successful stabilization of these environments thus requires the exceptional coordination of efforts, assets and skills across civil and military domains – collaborative leadership vice command and control, for which CA is adaptive to both forms.

“The military environment and the threats it presents are increasingly *trans-regional, multi-domain*, and

*multi-functional* in nature,” observes the new Joint Operations doctrine (JP 3-0). The most likely threats, notes Army Doctrine Reference Publication 3-0, Operations, are hybrid threats. “A hybrid threat is the diverse and dynamic combination of regular forces, irregular forces, terrorist forces, or criminal elements unified to achieve mutually benefitting threat effects.” After all, the Army Operating Concept looks to prevent, shape, and “win in a world of complexity.”

One thing is clear: under such conditions, community level tactics to address conflict and political transition necessarily have strategic implications. Regardless of where CA operates, it serves an essentially strategic mission. This unique time in global security leads to a convergence between military and civilian worlds, regardless of the type of engagement and level of effort. Unfortunately, the potential of this impact is weakened due to several existing gaps between tactical and national efforts. In the evolving world of complex missions, CA must be tactically and strategically aware, using its multi-component, multi-level network to tie in its own tactical efforts to strategic imperatives. In this way, CA is much more than a force multiplier or enabler, even in decisive operations. This is one reason the draft Army Concept for Civil Affairs sees it as the lead DoD “human geography” capability to engage civil societies and agencies by applying unique knowledge, skills, and abilities that promote Unified Action.

## **b. Incorporating the Engagement Concept to Prevent as well as Shape and Win**

The other major insight drawn from the discussion was that modern conflict management wasn’t all about threats – in fact, it was more about the drivers

of conflict and instability, an inherently more strategic than tactical challenge requiring more sophisticated approaches to which CA is well disposed. Given that, the implication is also the rising stock of conflict prevention and the understanding of conflict and peace as a continuum. Hence the rise of Joint Concept of Military Engagement as a strategic and concept not merely a warfighting function. Military Engagement, according to Joint Operations doctrine, is: "the routine contact and interaction between individuals or elements of the Armed Forces of the United States and those of another nation's armed forces, or foreign and domestic civilian authorities or agencies, to build trust and confidence, share information, coordinate mutual activities, and maintain influence."

As Daniels and Keay point out in their paper, "the U.S. policy shift from a *reactive* to more *pro-active* stance on global instability and pre-conflict engagement has been driven not only by moral ambition, but by the practical reality that the U.S. can neither afford - fiscally nor politically - to engage in perpetual warfare, nor to ignore simmering dynamics that have the potential to eventually threaten national or global security." Prevention as stated U.S. policy first emerged in the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review and has gained traction as a policy objective ever since. Accordingly, current Department of Defense (DoD) guidance to all six GCCs identifies conflict prevention as a task of increasing importance.

Identifying effective intervention opportunities "left of bang" requires working within complex and insecure environments, where communities do not conform to state institutions. Prioritizing sustainable outcomes through the consolidation of gains, as Lt. Gen. McMaster referred to it, requires the incorpora-

tion of civilian and military assets under a coherent, strategic civil-military conceptual framework that addresses the gulf between people and their system of governance – a workable common theory of change between civilian and military operations that can address legitimacy, governance, and social cohesion in a meaningful way for transitional environments.

Peacebuilding communities of practice in particular emphasize that social capital and collective action are critical for economic prosperity and sustainable development. They also understand, as most CA practitioners, the importance of engaging indigenous populations, communities, and institutions as a way of atomizing the scope of civil interaction beyond physical boundaries.

The reluctance of the Army to incorporate Engagement as a warfighting function leaves unanswered questions on the role of Civil Affairs at the strategic and operational levels, and whether CA concepts sufficiently support the breadth and depth of Military Engagement. Army CAO doctrine (FM 3-57) defines Civil-Military or Engagement (CME) as a SOCOM program of record, supportive of SOCOM program objectives. It even describes CME as a “tactical mission task.” What is missing is how this concept of CME supports the larger Army concept of Engagement and even broader Joint Concept of Military Engagement.

Lessons since 9/11 alone provide a strong enough argument to advocate and promote for Military Engagement as a Joint Function and for CA as enduring national strategic capability for it. Beyond filling an essential void among the warfighting challenges, Military Engagement could conceptually integrate CA as a key strategic capability as well as institutionalize its role in building the strategic and operational capital

with CIVUAPs necessary to prevent, shape, and win, especially in crises and crises, IW, and P&SO. Regardless of what happens to Joint or Army engagement concepts, CA will still need to strengthen its role in Mission Command at theater and operational and not just tactical levels.

In the emerging security environment, the civil-military challenge is not how to stabilize fragile and failing states directly from the top down – along the military government lines – but how to more indirectly enable appropriate civil society entities to stabilize communities and populations from the bottom up, without compromising the integrity, legitimacy, and effectiveness of civil actors or exacerbating security sector imbalances often a main source of instability to begin with. That, too, requires constant engagement.

Effective interventions that increase stability and consolidate gains require a deep understanding of complex, unstable environments. Without constant strategic presence and planning support from appropriately educated, trained, and experienced CA personnel at strategic and operational levels of command, U.S. approaches to national security missions risk perpetuating the challenges seen in Iraq and Afghanistan. Many field commanders and civilians were left to improvise solutions *ad hoc*, leading to inconsistent results and areas in an infinite cycle of clear-and-hold counterinsurgency actions. There was little social cohesion to fill gaps in civil society to take on the responsibilities of community ownership and management – including security. The complex mix of geographic terrain, socio-political groups, negative influencers, security environments and economic strife left civil and military leaders, and other Unified Action partners, simply reacting to conditions rather than follow-

ing an effective stabilization strategy to enhance overall governance conditions needed for consolidating gains in physical and human security.

In decisive action, CA forces build, provide, and maintain the commander's understanding of the civil situation in order to enable freedom of maneuver on the battlefield, protect civilians and civil infrastructure through its involvement in lethal as well as non-lethal targeting, and maximize positive civil interaction. CA provides critical civil component information through civil information management (CIM) analysis to the Common Operating Picture (COP) by conducting civil engagement and reconnaissance to improve understanding of local and regional customs and social and historical tensions. This preserves combat power. CA interacts with the civilian population and institutions to facilitate military operations and consolidate operational gains. A supporting civilian population can provide resources and information that facilitate friendly operations and provide a decisive advantage for friendly military force and other Unified Action partners to pursue humanitarian, diplomatic, and developmental activities that achieve international and national security objectives.

Given its unique, full-spectrum civil-military advisory, interorganizational coordination, and IW and P&SO advantages in comparison to other forces, as well as its emerging role in conflict prevention through Countering Violent Extremism (CVE), Persistent Engagement and other steady state programs, the role of CA in Military Engagement across the full continuum of peace and conflict is now even more crucial.



### **c. Operating in the Joint, Interorganizational, and Multinational Environment**

After identifying broader strategic and operational determinants for CA and CAO in support of the larger force's CMO, the group touched upon CA's comparative advantages with respect to the larger supported military and CIVUAPs in a series of short, scenario-driven vignettes. It fell short of a more granular survey of these comparative advantages – not only between CA and its military and civilian partners, but within the components of CA itself. It focused instead on identifying challenges to building and leveraging CA competencies.

Colonel (ret.) Dennis J. Cahill, Deputy Director, Civil Affairs Force Modernization at USAJFKSWCS at Ft. Bragg, NC, served with Guttieri as a discussant and subject matter expert throughout the Symposium workshop. His briefing explained the doctrinal identification of the role, core competencies, functions, characteristics, and principles of CA. He also identified key Army CA force development programs welcoming input from the workshop and the Regiment: namely, the Army CAO manual (FM 3-57); the draft Army Concept for Civil Affairs; the Army Warfighting Challenges; and PKSOI's Stability Operations Lessons Learned & Information Management System (SOLLIMS) quarterly Sampler dedicated to Civil Affairs (input for which has come separate to this report).

Pursuant to Cahill's briefing, the workshop group agreed with the Army's new emphasis on understanding the role, core competencies, functions, characteristics, and principles of Civil Affairs as found in the new doctrine, especially described in terms of the CAO mission and understanding CA as the main Joint capability for the planning and conduct of CMO.

Capabilities, they noted however, are not comparative advantages. The former demands only introspection while the latter requires outreach and collaboration. A major ongoing institutional as well as doctrinal shortcoming of the CA Regiment is its relatively limited knowledge of the JIM environment. Other than U.S. civilian agencies, most rank-and-file CA personnel know little about JIM partner organizations, roles, core competencies, functions, characteristics, and principles – there is little in the Professional Military Education (PME) system and training curriculum or available to the wider CA community to fill these knowledge gaps, and institutional linkages to such organizations are scant.

Few CA professionals have schooling or first-hand experience in either NATO or UN operations or with civil-military frameworks like Civil-Military Cooperation (NATO-CIMIC) or Coordination (UN-CIMIC), initiatives like NATO's "countering hybrid threats" that focuses on migration issues, or the UN's emphasis on the protection of civilians in stabilization and full-spectrum peace operations. As Hope suggests in his paper, USACAPOC(A) would be "well served to provide a liaison at the NATO CIMIC Center of Excellence (CCOE) to enhance cooperation and coordination for all CA-CIMIC interactions."

Within the CA Regiment itself, however, are crippling divisions and imbalances, especially between SOF and GPF, AC and RC CA. A plurality of especially non-SOF CA sensed that Army CA doctrine has persistently given greater proportional treatment to AC SOF CA (although the latter comprises less than 10% of Army CA), and hardly mentions Marine CA, for which FM 3-57 is also a reference. Interaction between AC SOF and RC GPF CA is largely limited to the command headquarters level, but hardly among

operators. AC GPF CA, in the form of the 85th CA Brigade, has barely survived a threat to its decade-only existence, which would have considerably reduced the Regiment's diversity and responsiveness to regional commands

While the doctrinally enunciated roles, core competencies, functions, characteristics, and principles for CA no doubt draw from a considerable cache of branch history and recent operational lessons, they are wholly command-and-control centric and fall short of a collaborative understanding of CA that CIVUAPs can relatively readily grasp and thus work with. For one, these lists are highly ambitious and exhaustive – they make better sense to CA but less sense to those CA must support or work with.

For another, they are largely framed in an operational and tactical rather than a strategic understanding of the role of CA, for instance, in strategic engagement, conflict management, war termination, and conflict prevention. In other words: while there is a robust discussion of ways, there is only an implied and disjointed framing of them toward an end or strategic purpose that links CA activities to what the SOF truths and imperatives describe as “political imperatives” and for consolidation of operational gains.

Additionally, many found the conceptual basis of CAO on military government and “stability” to be troubling – for the former, trying to meet today's human security conflict and transition management challenges with yesterday's state (or national) security constructs; for the latter, overlooking the understanding especially among CIVUAPs, more appropriate to addressing the drivers of conflict and instability, of peacebuilding as the universal conceptual framework for managing contemporary peace and security.

Ultimately, neither stability nor security are ends within themselves, but a way to foster an environment necessary for enhancing social cohesion, governance, economic livelihood that comprises the grand strategic goal of peace. This makes the military the multiplier to the civilian – not as has been commonly thought. Hence the gap in coordinated operational frameworks that better align civilian and military operations around bottom-up, locally-owned approaches to ensure host government accountability and citizen participation. Without military leaders facilitating coordination with CIVUAPs at strategic, operational, and tactical levels in this way, the U.S. will continue to struggle to prevent, shape, and win.

With respect to CIVUAPs, rather than constantly requesting their presence at military conferences and training exercises, overtaxing their thin staff capacities – the group agreed with Daniels and Keays – CA and other military commands should program greater participation and involvement in civilian agency and organization activities, not only in order to help both them and CA better understand how CA can be an enabler to them, but improving CA’s understanding of CIVUAPs missions, capabilities, and limitations – on a train-the-trainer basis – for pre-operational learning of CA units about their civilian partners.

This would go far to reverse the incorrect perception of civil-military alignment under any circumstances. Many of these CIVUAPs are also working closely with GCCs/SCCs/JFCs, further necessitating greater CA involvement at those HQs and at integration and exercise working group meetings that determine interagency requirements for exercises and other activities at those commands.

Another area of disjointedness and misalignment lies in CIM, which is currently seen as a command assessment rather than information-sharing or civil-military transition management tool. Current CAO doctrine, Karlsson and Karlson point out, “does not support a consolidated approach to CIM across the joint regiment.” There are many versions of CIM in practice, depending on which CA or supported command is in question – and none of them work toward a strategic end state.

This is why, as Hope mentions in his paper, “CA forces cannot provide coherent data to these sections to build a [civil-military common operational picture].” There is little commonality between SOF/AC and GPF/RC CA platforms for CIM, along with a lot of redundancy in civil assessment databases. And while CIM is “CA’s most critically needed battlefield operating system,” he adds, “[CIM] is a long way from being standardized and effective to its primary customers, specifically in the shaping and deterring environments.”

Furthermore, there is little standardized reference to CIVUAP indices and outlets such as the CIA’s Political Instability Task Force, the Humanitarian Cluster System, Sustainable Development Goals, and State Fragility Index, among many datasets that routinely track and report fragility factors, as Daniels and Keay note. CIM platforms should be compatible to these not only in order to integrate them into CA-supported GCC/SCC/JFC assessments for political-military planning and use. They should facilitate sharing and migration of data in order to enable the efforts and capabilities of CIVUAPs to whom the burden of stabilization and consolidation of political gains must go.

From a broader perspective, CA lacks the essential capability to horizontally and vertically share civil information to all of the various Joint/Army formations limiting the capability to integrate relevant, real-time information, and ingest the available sentiment analysis that affects the understanding of the human geography and operationalizes population-centric analysis. This current condition highlights the CA force's inability to promote a comprehensive COP and foster situational understanding under all potential conditions that may be confronted in the future operational environment.

Additionally, CIM capabilities and processes should look more to "big data" on structural fragility indispensable for transitional conflict management at the theater strategic and operational levels of management. "At present," they add, "the CAO running estimate and existing CIM capabilities are insufficient to process and operationalize the amount and type of information required for effective conflict prevention."

#### **d. Building a Ready Capacity for the Present and Future**

At the Symposium, the USACAPOC(A) Commander stated that "our adversaries and the dilemmas presented by our environment have evolved. We must not be content with building ready capacity to fight the last war but must also grow our capabilities so we are truly ready to win the next war or action other than war." It is important to recognize that the rising need for leaders of Military Engagement at the strategic and operational levels that can operate across the full range of operations in the JIM environment implies the growth of capabilities, which, in many ways the total CA force claims to possess, but perhaps

is limited by the capacity of current professional development platforms.

However, the clear lack of advanced CA training provides a significant challenge, calling into question the current relevance and capability of CA as a joint strategic capability for Military Engagement. Whereas USAJFKSWCS provides over a dozen SOF advanced courses, it offers no advanced or technical training to CA or Military Information Support Operations (MISO). Additionally, the group particularly called out that, although negotiation and mediation are key CA characteristics, there is little in the CA curriculum to train CA in those skills – especially from the viewpoint of CIVUAPs.

Although responsive to addressing a gap in capabilities of the six functional areas, the push toward the 38G governance has met significant challenges. USACAPOC(A) sought to fill these requirements in the past by informally identifying civilian-trained reservists in each respective area. With no recruiting capabilities of its own (relying on an Army Recruiting Command with limited understanding of either CA or the Reserves), with no incentive structures to attract such human resources such as a technical development pipeline for their non-military skills, and with CA officers beholden to the same professional and career development constraints as line officers, this has proven a significant challenge to fully train, integrate and staff in the RC, let alone the AC.

It's one thing to improve the policy context and capabilities for CA; it's another to improve its availability and access to its main military customers (GCCs/SCCs/JFCs) as well as its CIVUAPs – not only during crises but more importantly in the steady state. One salient observation before and since the Decade of

War is that you go to war with what you have – the relationships as well as capabilities invested in. In the present peace and security landscape, the strategic and operational capital these relationships represent are now more critical to decisive action and mitigating the drivers of conflict and instability that, in turn, generate the asymmetric, irregular, and non-linear threats that characterize this human landscape and for which capabilities like CA are well-suited to help counter.

A growth in CA capabilities, in light of Military Engagement, should not focus on merely duplicating functions of other government agencies, but rather on the type of technical and collaborative expertise that facilitates P&SO under the broader USG mission – “connectors,” “mavens,” and “salespersons,” as Karlsson and Karlson named them. CA is a lynchpin to decisive action in people-centric wars and to IW and P&SO in the JIM environment, and a key facilitator in their planning, targeting and operations. But CA must broaden and deepen its understanding of JIM-related policies, processes, planning, and operations to fulfill its potential.

In concert with the understanding of Military Engagement, and as the lead for human geography engagement, Civil Affairs has the responsibility and capability to strengthen interagency commitment, understanding, and planning and operations by facilitating and leading interagency and CMO education and training of broader military and interagency communities. This implies outreach and funded, sustained training platforms.

Then there is the issue of integrating multi-component CA forces. Although CA “is an integral part of the Joint Force and involved in nearly all operations at all levels,” as Saiddudin and Schafer note, such integration “can only come through a concept of SOF/



Conventional CA force interdependence rather than the wholesale integration of CA units into the linear conventional force structure.”

Instead, CA “must become more of a strategic network of decentralized teams more closely aligned with civilian agencies and other special operational forces that conduct tactical operations in concert with each other that seek to achieve strategic effects.” This runs counter to the cultural bias towards combat arms as well as the attitudes of a U.S. national security establishment more vested in decisive action than engagement. “Complexity, interconnectedness, and speed all work against the predictive and planning capabilities of traditional staff organizations.”

#### **e. Leveraging Civil Affairs**

Civil Affairs can only help shape, influence, and stabilize the human geography and contribute to conflict mitigation and prevention when appropriately leveraged by commanders and civilian partners who understand its comparative advantages on their terms. Among the most persistent gaps – identified perhaps more among CA commands than supported commands – was the low number of Civil Affairs planners at theater and operational commands as well as the paucity of civil-military operations directorates among the Army and Joint staff in the Pentagon.

Yet, improving the availability and access of CA goes beyond this – or, for example, reviewing legal, programming, and budgetary authorities and mechanisms – to allow supported GCC/SCC commands better access to Reserve Component CA and enable more robust CA support of missions such as for Regionally Aligned Forces, Building Partnership

Capacity, and Persistent Engagement, in addition to IW and P&SO. All this while RC CA commands must also use precious time available to train their personnel and units to meet service readiness requirements - hence the importance of the 85<sup>th</sup> CA Brigade as well as extraordinary training funds for RC CA.

For CA, both capabilities and relationships representing strategic and operational capital are a function of its mission readiness, some of the group pointed out. It is the latter in particular that sets CA apart from much of the rest of the force, which is why resources for deployments of CA for security cooperation should not be viewed simply as mission support but as a function of CA and supported command readiness. Yet, due to the overwhelming nesting of CA in the RC and the constant need for CA in steady state Military Engagement activities in-theater, training funds allocated for Army or Marine Reserve CA forces cannot be meted out in proportion to other RC forces whose operational demand signal is more episodic and less expansive.

Although an Executive policy level review is in order, CA commands themselves must more creatively and forcefully apply these legal and policy frameworks to enable a more robust presence to enhance planning, interoperability and training of both CA and supported forces, as Gen. Brooks and others suggested - until at least such time when authorities and budgetary mechanisms for leveraging RC CA for missions other than exercises and named operations are finally brought into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The newly formed OPCON relationship between the 351st CACOM and PACOM not only poses advantages in building closer command and staff planning relationships and CA

regional expertise. As a model, it could help enable GCCs/SCCs to seek ways to garner more intense CA support through their own Program Objective Memorandum (POM) budgeting cycle. In the short term, as Hope observed in his paper, Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funds may be available on a limited basis. “For the long term,” supported command planners and budgeters should “build future requirements for RC CA using 10 U.S.C. 12304B funding.”

Neither DoD nor the Joint Staff should overlook the fact that USACAPOC(A) is the largest DoD entity with the majority of CA and MISO forces and capabilities within the total force. And it is the only source of operational and strategic level Civil Affairs.

In any case, as Saiddudin and Schafer posit, leveraging the whole of Civil Affairs “requires less structural thinking as enablers or force multipliers and more efforts towards developing a business model that adapts to complexity within non-linear markets.”

## **2. Key Recommendations**

### **a. Policy**

#### *Recommendations:*

1. Designate Military Engagement, as described in Joint Operations doctrine (JP 3-0), as a Joint Function and CMO as a core Military Engagement activity for Unified Action (along with MISO and Foreign Area Officer operations), across the full range of operations but with particular emphasis on Phase 0 (Shape & Influence) for conflict prevention. Specific to this discussion, nest and integrate CMO/CAO/CA

accordingly in and with all appropriate Joint/Army doctrine. As such, the policy-authorities-doctrinal chain should clearly explain how geographic, service, and functional commands leverage the full scope of CA capabilities for Military Engagement. Develop CAO operational art and operational design as a subset of this as well as for SOF/GPF and AC/RC CA Joint “Phase 0” operational art.

2. In order to enable more continuous and robust CA support of full-range Military Engagement, Security Cooperation, IW, and P&SO missions including for Regionally Aligned Forces, Building Partnership Capacity, and Persistent Engagement, conduct a DoD-directed review of how supported command planners and budgeters as well as CA commands should “build future requirements for RC CA using Title 10 U.S.C. 12304B funding,” as Hope recommends in his paper. This includes how OCO funds may be available on a limited, short-term basis. If necessary, conduct a wider DoD review of legal, programming, and budgetary authorities, mechanisms, and resources. Obtain Congressional approval for appropriate Title 10 revisions per this review.
3. In the interim, USACAPOC(A), in consultation and coordination with the U.S. Army Reserve Command (USARC) and supported GCCs/SCCs, should develop guidelines for CACOMs to more creatively and forcefully apply frameworks Title 10 U.S.C. 12304B in order to enable a more robust presence to enhance planning, interoperability and training of CA and sup-

ported forces in balance with the Chief of Staff of the Army's priority to build readiness and USARC strategy to achieve readiness objectives.

4. USARC provides a general officer with a CA background to the National Security Council staff to foster policies that enable greater inter-agency integration, coordination, and communication between interagency partners and the Civil Affairs community as well as the Army Reserve for GCCs/SCCs/JFCs.

## **b. Doctrine**

### *Recommendations:*

1. The Joint/Army CA doctrinal proponent (SO-COM and USAJFKSWCS) should develop a comprehensive full-spectrum, multi-component concept of CA and CAO/CMO, especially with respect to Military Engagement (as recommended above) that explains how CME supports the Joint Concept of Military Engagement – not just for SOF CA focused on CVE but for all CA within the Joint Concept of Military Engagement. It should address strategic/operational/tactical harmonization of Joint strategic guidance for Military Engagement for CMO/CAO as well as how geographic, service, and functional commands leverage the full scope of CA capabilities for Military Engagement, in coordination with other, related military capabilities and activities such as MISO, the Foreign Area Officer (FAO) program and State Partnership. It should also address how CA contributes

to Building Partnership Capacity and Regionally Aligned Forces missions under the Joint concept of Military Engagement, including for example the implied task of having knowledge of partner (NATO/UN) civil-military operations frameworks that most partner military forces subscribe to. Ensure this comprehensively connected understanding of Military and Civil-Military Engagement reflects in the doctrinal discussion of CA core competencies and functions, characteristics, and principles, as well as in shaping operations, Civil Affairs methodology, etc.

2. In similar fashion, in addition to decisive action, FM 3-57 should have a more robust discussion of the prominent, full-spectrum role the whole of CA plays in P&SO per Joint doctrine, including for example how CA's respective roles in and contributions to P&SO relate to each other (i.e., peace operations with stability operations). This includes a discussion of how functional specialists can supported Unified Action.
3. Somewhere in the Army CAO doctrine there should be a discussion of CIVUAPs and JIM partners and their own core competencies and functions, characteristics, and principles, and methodologies for civil-military liaison and partnering in JIM settings as an extension of the broader USG mission.
4. Any doctrinal description of CA should be a standardized adaptation of an "elevator speech" that summarizes what Civil Affairs is about from a strategic standpoint, such as in the first

paragraphs of this report. This would foster a common frame of reference for understanding CA among various CA forces themselves, supported commands, partner militaries, and CIVUAPs. This includes the Army Concept for Civil Affairs and the overview of CA/CAO at the beginning of Chapter 1 of FM 3-57.

5. Joint and Army doctrines discussing the indirect approach should be expanded beyond decisive action and “kinetics” to Military Engagement and CMO/CAO in the JIM environment. The majority of DoD doctrine is focused on the direct approach and unilateral operations.
6. Given the strategic imperative to operate in the JIM environment for Military Engagement and CMO/CAO, include multilateral military counterparts such as the NATO CIMIC Center of Excellence and UN DPKO Office of Military Affairs as well as CIVUAPs in the CMO/CAO doctrinal review process. Among CIVUAPs are the USAID Office of Civilian-Military Cooperation (CMC), State Department Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO), InterAction, the Alliance for Peacebuilding, and OCHA/CMCoord. USAJFKSWCS has ready partners to facilitate this at and through NDU-CCO, PKSOI, and the U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP) as well as the Civil Affairs Association. Doctrinal writers will need to adjust disclosure guidelines to enable wider review.
7. Adopt non-U.S. civil-military and CIVUAP concepts, terminology, and measures where appropriate and feasible, in order to facilitate

better steady-state intercommunication, interoperability, and transition of tasks to competent and legitimate CIVUAPs. If they cannot be adopted, then the most impactful should be at least cited for CA situational awareness and understanding of CIVUAPs. Among these are peacebuilding concepts such as community resilience and international frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals. Enhance the Civil Affairs Methodology, for example, by incorporating outcome-based CIVUAP methodologies, to include: conflict analysis, theory of change, and measurement and evaluation techniques (M&E). In the discussion of CIM, consider how, CIM information and products may be shared with and migrated to CIVUAPs.

8. In its review of FM 3-57, USAJFKSWCS should consider a more extensive discussion in Chapter 4 of the CA/CAO contribution to unified land operations not only within the four tasks of decisive action (offense, defense, stability, and defense support to civil authorities) but also, at the same level of rigor, a discussion of CA/CAO contribution to Military Engagement (beyond SOF-centric CME), as a steady-state full-spectrum shaping operation complementary to decisive action, with a more in-depth treatment of CIVUAPs and guidelines on planning, liaison, and execution of tasks by, with, and through CIVUAPs, and in clear support of Unified Action. Otherwise, the discussion of CME (as currently framed as SOF-specific and CVE) in Chapter 4 appears to make CME merely a supporting activity of decisive action.



9. Army CAO doctrine should list civil-military assessment and advisory functions, either within Civil Affairs activities of CA core competencies or as an expansion of the discussion of the Civil Affairs Staff Support activity, throughout CAO doctrine to include assessment and advisory functions. In any case, CA doctrine must explicitly frame the importance of skilled civil-military assessment and advisory functions among core competencies and link it to Civil Considerations Analysis. While “Assess” is listed as a purpose of the Civil Reconnaissance task, “Advise” is not listed as a purpose for CME or as a phase of Civil Affairs Methodology. In addition, CIVUAP assessment and analysis frameworks should be mentioned as either information sources for CA Civil Considerations Analysis as well as development CA products (or vice-versa) that may, in turn, influence – if only to make CA operators cognizant of these frameworks. Finally, beyond updating CA training and education platforms, the CA proponent should offer – directly or through CA commands to supported commands and partners – products to advise supported commands on the use of CA for civil-military assessment and as command advisors. CA units must include skills as part of their pre-mission readiness, in particular for Civil-Military Engagement and CA shaping operations.
10. CAO doctrine should incorporate all the information-related capabilities into a comprehensive and coordinated approach for understanding and shaping the human geography for the

desired effects. Civil Information should fuse all related information through the development of the civil overlay to the COP.

### **c. Organization**

#### ***Recommendations:***

1. Program, authorize, budget, and fill staff directorates at Joint and Army Staff levels (e.g., J9/G9) in the Pentagon, with functions similar to those of other principal staff directorates, focused on advising senior decision-makers in the National Capital Region and in GCCs/SCCs/TSOCs on CA and military support to governance policy, planning, resourcing, and employment issues. Develop a multi-component CA staffing platform, based on the initial concept of the Civil Military Advisory Group, as a vehicle for interagency engagement. Partner with other DoD influence capabilities to increase engagement with the interagency partners through a permanent CA presence in the National Capital Region.
2. Program, authorize, budget, and fill CA strategic and operational planning staff at Joint Staff J5 Pol-Mil regional directorates, Joint Staff J7, GCC/SCC and JFC commands in all regions. CA plans and operations personnel – SOF/GPF, AC/RC, and Army/Marine – at GCC/SCC command levels should be assigned or apportioned to the appropriate plans and operations staff sections (J3 or J5) to ensure CA/CAO integration across all phases and for all activities, including conflict prevention, to provide

their expertise during key GCC HQ staff tasks related to plans, operations, exercises, and assessments. Consider Military Engagement Fusion Cells as part of CMO staff directorates (J9) in appropriate staffs in order to synchronize PAO, IO, MISO and CA per CAO doctrine.

3. Consider a multi-component Army CA force directorate or headquarters to improve AC/RC and SOF/GPF force integration and maximize the respective comparative advantages of this diverse force to best service supported GCCs, SCCs, and JFCs.
4. GCCs/SCCs should consider adopting the same command and control model for OPCON of the 351st CACOM to PACOM, but ensure that steady state command and staff and unit support for Military Engagement is reflected in the POM for other than named operations and exercises.
5. Program, authorize, budget, and fill CA personnel as organic to Army Total Force BCTs, e.g., S-9 CA cell at brigade staff.
6. Improve the capabilities of CAPTs at both CACOM and brigade levels to coordinate continuously with SOF CA, MISO, FAO, and other IW/P&SO capabilities as well as with GCCs/SCCs, partner military counterparts, and CIVUAPs in order to function as a as a planning and coordination hub (or “reachback cell”) for management of access to RC CA functional specialist and other relevant capabilities, including CIM.

7. Resource HQ, USACAPOC(A) with the requisite capabilities to provide persistent and emergent reach-back support for CIM on a trans-regional and multi-domain level.
8. CA personnel specialized in Military Engagement and conflict prevention at GCC/SCC/JFC staff levels should – in practice more than doctrine – be an integral part of the various boards, bureaus, centers, cells, and working groups (B2C2WGs) for full-range theater campaign planning, crisis action plan (CAP) development/review, security cooperation programming, theater assessments, and various Joint Force Command operations sections.
9. USACAPOC(A) should provide or designate a representative at the NATO CCOE for Military Engagement and strategic planning purposes. USACAPOC(A) should similarly have a military representative at the USAID CMC. CACOMs should establish CA strategic planning linkages with key regional CIVUAPs to improve Military Engagement.
10. Plan, program, and budget for CACOM and CA brigade mobile engagement and training teams to conduct staff coordination visits and orientations with CIVUAP partner organizations as a Military Engagement and unit readiness activity. Main purposes would be to: co-educate on respective core competencies and functions, characteristics, and principles; facilitate civil-military planning; and, obtain reciprocal education and training from these partners that, on a train-the-trainer basis, can be relayed to

sending CA command personnel to improve operational readiness related to knowledge of CIVUAPs.

11. CA products and CIM processes should be refined to improve data mining, modeling, and visualization on structural factors of fragility in priority countries and targeted regions, and tailored to provide timely, relevant information to achieve conflict preventive outcomes – with transferability of these data to CIVUAPs in mind. This analysis should serve as a critical input to the many working groups, operational planning teams, and strategic decision making at the GCC HQ and subordinate levels.

#### **d. Training**

##### ***Recommendations:***

1. Eliminate the SOF/GPF divide in CA training at all PME levels. Develop sustained platforms for training the broader force, as well as CIVUAPs, on CA support to Military Engagement and CMO.
2. Provide advanced skills training to broaden CA generalist knowledge and skill sets, not only in CIVUAP negotiation and mediation, but in JIM-relevant areas, strategic and operational engagement of partner nations and CIVUAPs, etc. in the Civil Affairs Qualification Course.

3. Incorporate functional area education into initial and advanced CA training, with the possible inclusion of skill identifiers.
4. RC/GPF CA commands must take the lead from – or maintain constant connectivity with – AC/SOF CA steady state CAO planning and exercise integration at all Combat Training Centers (CTCs), in addition to episodic exercise participation and support.
5. Establish an Interagency Fellowship program for Civil Affairs officers in the O3-O4 grades and NCOs in the E6-E7 grades in order to broaden their exposure to interagency partners followed by utilization in a strategic capacity in support of USACAPOC(A) or the broader Army Reserve. A one-year fellowship similar to the Joint Fellow or Presidential Fellow models that enable select individuals to rotate through multiple interagency partners should be considered in order to maximize interagency exposure as opposed to an assignment at one agency for the duration.
6. Enable CA senior NCOs and mid-grade officers to attend the Joint Targeting School.
7. USARC should consider exceptional training funding for USACAPOC(A) in addition to military occupational specialty (MOS) qualifications in order to enable staff assistance and unit support to GCC/SCC/JFC commands in order to build relationships with Unified Action part-

ners as well as regional situational understanding as a form of Military Engagement mission readiness and PME OJT.

## **e. Material**

### ***Recommendations:***

1. Facilitate shared CIM technology across civil and military spaces. A potential starting point is an interagency data base of international civic knowledge and interventions. CA, as the Joint Force lead in understanding human geography, is well positioned to serve as a leading contributor to this.
2. Establish an *ad hoc* Research, Development and Acquisition (RD&A) Committee at the DoD executive authority level to review and report on CA equipment and information technology and management systems needs and propose RD&A programs to meet those needs, based on inputs from the Civil Affairs Regiment.

## **f. Leadership and Education**

### **Recommendations:**

1. As expeditiously as possible, USAJFKSWCS should finally develop and institute a multi-component, multi-service resident and distance learning Civil Affairs Advanced Course, that meets or augments JPME and service requirement for senior staff school. The program should emphasize CAO planning, integration and support at the strategic and operational

levels across the full range of operations as well as for Military Engagement, intense knowledge and understanding of operations in the JIM environment, CIVIUAPs at especially the inter-agency level, etc. It should also cover CAO in conflict prevention along with decisive action.

2. Promote greater participation of CA personnel in courses such as those taught at the Army's School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) and the Joint Forces Staff College's Joint Advanced Warfighting School (JAWS), especially for those destined to serve in CAPTs and on operational/strategic command level staffs. Promote greater participation of both AC and RC CA officers in resident Military Education Level 1 schools (war colleges, etc.).
3. Ensure greater attention to CMO/CAO/CA as part of a greater curriculum emphasis on IW and P&SO education in the Joint/Army PME system - at pre-commissioning, primary, and intermediate PME levels as well as at senior and general/flag officer levels, in order to improve leveraging of CA at all levels of command and across the full range.
4. Promote opportunities for civil-military education through the interoperability between DoD, interagency, and international partners at the strategic level. with CA acting as a key link in positions as liaison, staff, and advisors.
5. Provide greater opportunity for higher academic education in functional specialty area



skills, regional, cultural, and language knowledge, and in international relations and conflict resolution at primary, intermediate, and senior PME levels for CA personnel. This includes Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs).

6. Enhance opportunities for CA personnel to obtain both interorganizational and CIVUAP resident and distance education and training for improving interorganizational and CIVUAP familiarity, regional language and cultural awareness skills, etc.. Enable access and funding authorization for USAJFKSWCS-approved CIVUAPs training and education programs – through the Army Training Network and Joint Knowledge Online. Award “drill points” to RC CA/MISO personnel and promotion points for NCOs as done in the past.

## **g. Personnel**

### **Recommendations:**

1. Make Civil Affairs an Army accession branch to enable recruitment and development of CA officers from commissioning. Enhance sustainable career paths by opening key positions at the strategic and operation levels, and filling O2A billets.
2. Determine the necessity of CA functional specialties in the light of the principles the Engagement Concept. Identify clear positions, roles, and responsibilities for CA functional specialties. Create the appropriate personnel, whether

through institutional training or the addition of skills identifiers, MOSs, or Warrant Officers. Consider the use of Personnel Service Contracts as an alternative to obtaining functional specialists, similar in concept to those employed by USAID/OFDA.

3. Have the U.S. Army Recruiting Command assign or apportion a recruiting team with sound knowledge of both CA and the Reserve Component at USACAPOC(A) and CACOM levels to improve recruitment of personnel from the RC and civilian sector.
4. Institute a dual track FAO program for AC and RC CA/MISO and enable additional skill identification coding in military personnel records accordingly. Consider CA/MISO officers serving in FAO billets as Key Developmental and career enhancing assignments.
5. Implement a new career development model for officers and NCOs that preserves regional and cultural expertise through liaison programs and fellowships, and de-emphasizes a command track.
6. Continue to piggyback on the growing interest in direct commissioning of civilians with cybersecurity expertise for Army Cyber Command's as part of the broader, Congressionally mandated Army study to ensure inclusion of direct commissioning for certain CA functional specialties at certain levels of expertise and experience, as already exists for medical, legal, and

religious ministry professionals – along with consideration of making some CA functional specialists warrant officers.

## **h. Facilities**

### *Recommendations:*

1. Pursuant to Policy recommendation 1, establish a Joint Military Engagement Center of Excellence (JMEECoE) as the Joint research, development, education, and training center for PAO, IO, MISO, CA, and CMO, as well as a forum for interorganizational engagement professional development. Place the CoE in DC to facilitate greatest interaction with interorganizational partners, partner nations, CIVUAPs (including the interagency community, UN, NGOs, and the private sector).
2. Consider PKSOI as the JMEECoE's training and education and doctrinal center – as an extension of its role as the Joint Proponent for P&SO. Offer multi-agency and academic (e.g., NDU) accreditation.
3. Obtain congressional approval for appropriate Title 10 and budget authorities.

## **3. Conclusion – Refining the Civil Affairs Message**

Civil Affairs' most important customers and partners need a better understanding of what CA can contribute to their missions. CA, in turn, should communicate what it is ready to deliver, regardless

of component, service, or level of action CA finds itself – from planning and conducting IW and P&SO, engaging in decisive operations, supporting humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations, countering violent extremism, and performing security cooperation and assistance missions. Such a narrative, however, comes about through long term relationship-building and institutionalization from widespread repeated practice rather than simply by printing it in policy or doctrine.

In a peace and security environment now shaped largely by compelling and comprehensible narrative, a narrative for CA itself becomes more critical than ever because of where CA works amidst complexity and the gaps spaces between actions and actors in the wider JIM environment. Whether formal or informal, the revised “elevator speech” on Civil Affairs should encase a new narrative that looks upon the less understood comparative advantages as well as doctrinally enunciated roles, core competencies, functions, characteristics, and principles for CA in Army CA doctrine and the draft Army as well as the draft Army Concept for Civil Affairs for CA’ s discussion of CA role in “human geography,” as a point of departure.

The doctrinal referents, however, for contextualizing CA and CAO, should be more at the Joint level. Even in Army (and Marine) CA doctrine, all aspects of Civil Affairs should draw clear lines to Joint concepts, especially in terms of how CA and CAO support CMO in decisive action, IW, P&SO, Military Engagement, and ultimately Unified Action." Only this way can CA be considered more as a Joint rather than service capability.

Much of that language may also be drawn from the first paragraphs of this report and those of previous

Symposiums. Paramount among these considerations to understand Civil Affairs, what it is about, and what it does strategically as well as operationally and tactically – as part of a much larger, broader JIM environment it increasingly finds itself in, and understandable to CIVUAPs and other partners upon whose success both CA and its supported commands are progressively more reliant upon for them and the nation they serve to prevent, shape, and win the conflicts to come.

This would make imperative a more unified organizational effort on the part of the Regiment to develop its concepts institutional identity and discuss its ways forward with these partners rather than simply among themselves and their immediate clientele, for which the Civil Affairs Symposia, Roundtables, and Issue Papers provide an ideal platform.

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# There are more than Two Crayons in the Box

CPT John K. Karlsson  
CPT Michael K. Karlson

The common operational picture (COP) is a Commander's foundational understanding of the operational environment. Units are typically depicted using four primary colors: blue for friendlies, red for enemies, green for neutrals, and yellow for uncertain units.<sup>1</sup> When looking at the average COP, the bias and tunnel vision for the colors blue and red becomes apparent. An entire system, *Blue Force Tracker*, helps Commanders spatially recognize friendly units. The S2, G2, J2, and Intelligence Agencies all update COPs by analyzing enemy threats. While a "blue/red" depiction of the operating environment may be sufficient for a force-on-force construct, the ambiguities of the contemporary operating environment demand a broader representation. Army Doctrine Publication 3-0, (ADP 3-0) Unified Land Operations, characterizes future conflicts in the following way, "The most likely security threats that Army forces will encounter are best described as hybrid threats. A hybrid threat is the diverse and dynamic combination of regular forces, irregular forces, terrorist forces, or criminal elements unified to achieve mutually benefitting threat effects." After all, the Army Operating Concept looks to prevent, shape, and "win in a world of complexity."<sup>2</sup>

Simply put, the Department of Defense is not the only entity that attempts to engage these hybrid threats in the contemporary operating environment. The civil populace, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), inter-governmental organizations (IGOs),

faith-based organizations, and corporations are all competing for a position of relative advantage in the same geographical areas. There is a need to spatially recognize these divergent stakeholders and analyze their impact on the traditional blue/red COP. This is not being done at the strategic level.

Civil Affairs (CA) forces are in the best position to perform this critically strategic operational analysis role for Geographic Combatant Commands (GCCs). CA can provide doctrine, organization, training, material, leadership, personnel, and facilities (DOTMLPF) recommendations to fill this gap by advocating the need for a functioning CIM cell at the GCCs.

### **What is the need?**

In order to properly understand the need for a functioning CIM cell at the GCCs, it is important for one to understand the need for Civil Affairs writ large. Conducting Civil Affairs Operations is a component of the Mission Command warfighting function. Mission Command is commander-centric and the role of the commander is to drive the operations process by understanding, visualizing, describing, directing, leading, and assessing.<sup>3</sup> Civil Affairs forces therefore help a commander understand the civil population and describe how the civil population affects military operations. To accomplish this, Civil Affairs forces assess the operational environment by conducting civil reconnaissance, civil engagement, and civic action programs and projects. These activities serve as the building blocks of civil information and Civil Affairs forces use this information to help a commander visualize the operating environment. Without conducting Civil Affairs operations, a commander has information gaps that could negatively impact the mission.

## **How is this need not being met at the combatant command level?**

The Joint Force is working on an operating concept called *Human Applications of Military Operations* (HAMO) and Special Operations Command (SOCOM) published *Operating in the Human Domain* in support of HAMO. It provides clear-cut guidance on capabilities required to succeed in the human domain. One such capability is to, "Identify and Track Friendly, Neutral, and Adversary Individuals, Groups, and Populations to Enable Campaign Design and Execution." The reason for this is quite simple, to not only counteract adversary influence but also influence friendly populations.<sup>4</sup> Again, when analyzing "*Operating in the Human Domain*," the bias towards red and blue becomes apparent and the document does not fully discuss neutral and uncertain actors.

Why is it so important to understand this group of actors? Consider the following question. What do SOCOM, the United Nations World Food Program (WFP), and Doctors without Borders all have in common? Last year, all three operated in essentially the same seventy countries. In fact, if one were to expand this sample size to more IGOs and NGOs, the same sixty to seventy nations would consistently be on the list.<sup>5</sup> This is by no chance a coincidence as the security concerns of SOCOM often intersect with the humanitarian concerns of IGOs and NGOs. As a whole, the Joint Force is currently lacking an analysis of how the humanitarian community affects conflict, security concerns, and social grievances in Phase 0 operations.

CA Teams can conduct this analysis and not only share the information with military partners, but also



with interagency and other Civilian Unified Action Partners. In order to do that, it is important to look at conflict analysis through the lens of the Conflict Assessment Framework 2.0, (CAF 2.0), a U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) framework on which CA teams are cross-trained. At its core, the CAF 2.0 argues that the foundation of conflict resides in perceived or real grievances.<sup>6</sup> Both violent extremist organizations (VEOs) and the humanitarian community often address these grievances, albeit differently. While VEOs seek to exploit grievances for nefarious aims, NGOs and IGOs try to remedy the grievances with programs and projects that promote stability, good governance, and development. Fully understanding this dichotomy increases understanding and allows for better framing of the problem, which is a key ingredient of Mission Command. This is just one of many examples illustrating the need to expand the traditional blue/red COP and to account for changes in the modern operating environment.

### **How Does CA Fit into This?**

In his breakthrough book, *The Tipping Point*, Malcolm Gladwell posited the idea that there are three types of people responsible for social change: connectors, mavens, and salesmen.<sup>7</sup> Simply put, connectors link people together, mavens accumulate knowledge and help disseminate it, and salesmen persuade. At the tactical level, CA serves the Joint Force by providing regionally aligned and culturally astute soldiers and marines who in many cases perform connecting functions. This makes CA an ideal conduit between the Commander and the civil populace and Civilian Unified Action Partners, creating a unique place in

the operational space for CA to analyze and neutral, uncertain networks. CA teams accomplish this analysis by conducting civil engagements, civil reconnaissance, and civil action programs at the tactical level. These CA specific tasks answer key information gaps in which no other staff section specializes. Information collected by CA teams transcend multiple staff sections and the can be used for a variety of reasons. For instance, CA teams supporting GCC level humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) lines of effort will most likely conduct assessments of key infrastructure including ports, major supply routes, distribution networks, and communication networks.

Virtually every joint component in the GCC could benefit from this assessment and a recent successful example of this occurred during PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP 2016 (PP16). CA teams and planners from the 84<sup>th</sup> CA Battalion provided critical stakeholder analysis and integrated multiple lines of effort in support of disaster planning and response during PP16. The CA teams supported U.S. Navy Destroyer Squadron 23 (DESRON 23) during the largest annual humanitarian and civic assistance exercise in Southeast Asia in East Timor and the Philippines. The CA element leveraged relationships and their knowledge of disaster planning to bring in personnel from the WFP and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) to assist host nation government and military personnel with crisis action planning during planned conferences and symposiums.

This broader audience was more representative of the Joint Interorganizational and Multinational (JIM) variables in those two countries and greatly enhanced the HA/DR common operational picture for Pacific Fleet (PACFLT) and the DESRON 23 Commodore. By

doing this, the exercise accomplished several security cooperation goals and PACFLT strategic planners were able to begin incorporating best CA practices for future exercises. Furthermore, the 84<sup>th</sup> CA Battalion was inactivated in September of 2016 and the work done in support of PP16 was turned over to E/83<sup>rd</sup> Civil Affairs Battalion to assist their planned support of PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP 2017 at the tactical level. This is just one example of how broadening the COP is not only crucial to success in the JIM environment but also endemic to CA organizational culture.

While the function of CA at the tactical level is unambiguous, the function of CA at the theater strategic level has yet to coalesce. At higher levels, CA must now perform maven and salesman functions. It is one thing for CA personnel to collect information at the tactical level, but it is an entirely different skillset to fuse this information into political-military meaning at the GCC level. In addition to conducting coordination and planning at the GCC, CA also needs to be responsible for “selling” this actionable information to the rest of the command. This ensures that CA personnel disseminate civil information that greatly increases the situational understanding at operational and strategic levels.

### **How to Accomplish This: Changes to DOTMLPF**

The Joint Force takes a holistic approach to implementing solutions by looking at doctrine, organization, training, material, leadership, personnel, and facilities (DOTMLPF) which are requisite to impact change. The following sections will highlight existing realities, and when necessary recommend changes within the DOTMLPF paradigm, specifically within Doctrine, Material, Organization, and Training.

## The Gap between CIM Doctrine and CIM Systems

Current Civil Affairs doctrine does not support a consolidated approach to CIM across the joint regiment. While JP 3-57 provides the conceptual framework for what CIM is, there is no follow-on document that discusses the full execution of the CIM process from the tactical to strategic level. The end-result is a verifiable nightmare of disconnected data and databases, ill suited to consistently and holistically update the COP at the GCC level.

Clear and relevant doctrine applicable to joint CA forces is required in order for CA to be utilized on a consistent and efficient basis beyond the tactical and operational levels. Instead, current Civil Affairs doctrine only provides for the understanding and implementation of CIM during CA Operations (CAO) and CMO with regards to analysis. "Analysis is at the core of CIM. Analysis is the sifting of information for patterns and indicators of past behavior's or ideas that might possess predictive value and application. Analysis molds information into a usable product for the commander and staff".<sup>8</sup>

Ostensibly, this seems straightforward and certainly relevant towards meeting the information requirements of commanders in the contemporary operating environment. However, in practice the issue is not so much with the application of CIM, but with the management of this information for future and continued use. Currently, there is nothing in CA doctrine that recommends how this information should be collated or disseminated. The end-result is a myriad of databases and service-based approaches to the management of CIM.

This leads to further problems in the DOTMLPF construct, namely in Material. For example, United States Marine Corps (USMC) Civil Affairs forces use Marine Corps Civil Information Management (MARCIM). Army CA forces use CIM data processing system (CIM-DPS) and other theatre specific systems such as Combined Information Data Network Exchange (CIDNE). Previously, Navy Maritime Civil Affairs Teams (MCAT) used the All-Partners Access Network (APAN) when supporting exercises such as PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP.

An article published in *Small Wars Journal* in September 2016 sums up the disharmonious management of CIM succinctly: “The problem is money. A joint system requires two or more services contribute funds to a joint program. Army and the USMC have the most to gain because both services have CA forces. USSOCOM suspended CIM-DPS development and reprogrammed funds to finance JCIMS [Joint Civil Information Management] development, but the USMC is satisfied with their MARCIM system and have little desire to fund JCIMS. The Army is unhappy with MARCIM security protocols on the worldwide web. Meanwhile the USAR has access to special operations CIM-DPS but rarely trains with it”.<sup>9</sup> This is obviously a work in progress and the JCIMS steering group is analyzing several of these considerations for future implementation.

What is vital for the manifestation of a harmonious CIM system however, is something that not only collects CA internal CIM but also shares it with as many stakeholders as possible.

## Organization

On October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015, the Army released a structure update (ARSTRUC) that cut the 85<sup>th</sup> CA Brigade, decreased slots in the 95<sup>th</sup> CA Brigade, and aligned CA Planning Teams at the GCCs. These teams at the GCCs will be led by a colonel and will play a critical role in coordinating Civil Affairs at the theater strategic level. While the modified table of equipment (MTOE) supports the planning, synchronization, and coordination needs of the Army, it does not account for two critical factors. First, there is no joint element in the planning cell. By not including Marine CA elements at the strategic level, the regiment is missing a key opportunity to increase interoperability and share information.

The second, and most critical flaw in the MTOE, is the lack of a standardized Civil Information Management Cell. The CIM Cell at the GCC could fulfill a variety of needs and there are certain capabilities that would increase the common operational picture of the GCC. The GCC CIM Cell is needed to collate and fuse all CIM data from the 95<sup>th</sup> CA Brigade, 83<sup>rd</sup> CA Battalion, reserve Civil Affairs elements, and Marine CA units. While each unit has its own organic CIM shop, this data is largely stove piped and not aggregated at the strategic level. Fusing all the data would help identify gaps in civil information and would allow Civil Affairs planners to target these gaps. Due to its unique position at the GCC, the strategic level CIM shop should create analytical products for stakeholders within the GCC. These products need to have information collated from across the CA spectrum, and also information from yellow and green networks.

Additionally, the GCC needs to be able to perform analysis of CIM data produced from NGOs and IGOs and summarize this vast amount of information into

something actionable at the strategic level. Organizations such as the International Organization of Migration (IOM) and UNOCHA produce highly detailed, accurate products that are of significant value to the GCC. Analyzing these products not only allows the GCC to gain a wider perspective, but also allows strategic leaders to synchronize lines of effort more effectively with key IGOs.

## **Training**

Brigadier General William Mason, the Commanding General of the proposed Institute for Military Support to Governance and the Deputy Commanding General of USAJFKSWCS highlighted an interesting, albeit alarming fact with respect to CA training at the 2016 Civil Affairs Roundtable. Taking a look at the course catalog for USAJFKSWCS, there are over ninety courses taught at USAJFKSWCS. Of these 90 courses, the only courses taught at USAJFKSWCS for CA Soldiers exclusively are the initial entry Civil Affairs Qualification Course (CAQC) classes. While the CAQC is tasked with preparing Soldiers for their first assignments in a CA unit, subsequent specialized training past the CAQC is missing. Post-CAQC training is vital for the Regiment for two main reasons.

First, these courses would serve as a mechanism for standardization of myriad jobs outside of an organic CA unit. For instance, CA Soldiers that support brigade and group staffs could have a shared foundation of methodology and understanding of CA staff roles in both general purpose and Special Operations units by attending a standardized S9 course. Second, post-CAQC training brings the Regiment together in formal settings.

The Civil Affairs Roundtables and Symposia also go a long way towards these ends, but more is required to take full advantage of the broad range of experiences and ideas within the entire Regiment. Each facet of the Regiment has important lessons to offer and an academic setting provides an outstanding opportunity to bring these lessons to the forefront.

With that, the CA Regiment needs to identify necessary advanced skills and have USAJFKSWCS develop courses to address these training gaps. This would allow for some form of professional military education to develop and eventually drive career progression models. One of the immediate needs that would drive career progression is the above-mentioned example of a standardized CMO or S9 planners' course. After completing the course, one would serve in an O-6 level command and future assignments would build on this assignment. A follow-on course needs to be created as well that trains CA Soldiers and Marines to conduct CIM analysis and product creation at the strategic level. Without a formalized, standardized course to do this, the GCC will receive analysis that derives solely from individual experiences and professional development of personnel slotted at the GCC.

## **Conclusion**

The modern COP is a kaleidoscope of hybrid threats, diverse JIM entities engaging these threats, and a myriad of civilian organizations and host-nation factions pursuing a wide range of goals within the same geographic areas. Several doctrinal, organizational, and training gaps must be addressed in order to facilitate CIM at the strategic level in support of the Geographic Combatant Commands. Current Civil Af-



fairs doctrine must be both descriptive of the contemporary problem and prescriptive of a joint approach to CIM, leveraging the full range of capabilities within the CA Regiment. A CIM Cell at the GCC level will maximize the efficiency of multiple data providers throughout the area of responsibility and serve as an organizational conduit for CA interoperability.

Lastly, post-CAQC training opportunities geared specifically towards operational and strategic level assignments will define a joint approach to CIM at those levels, and serve as a touch point for capturing the diverse experiences and viewpoints across the CA Regiment. The stark reality is that the United States military will continue to face more ambiguous, more dangerous, and more rapidly evolving threats. Civil Affairs units are uniquely positioned to collect and accurately represent these diverse and complex variables in the modern operational environment.

General George C. Marshall spoke to similar challenges in his June 1947 Marshall Plan speech delivered at Harvard University. "An essential part of any successful action on the part of the United States is an understanding on the part of the people of America of the character of the problem and the remedies to be applied. Political passion and prejudice should have no part. With foresight, and a willingness on the part of our people to face up to the vast responsibility which history has clearly placed upon our country, the difficulties I have outlined can and will be overcome."<sup>10</sup>

Commanders will need more than two colors in the crayon box to illustrate the current threat environment and recommend relevant, timely, and effective courses of action to the American decision makers of tomorrow. Commanders will need a unified, adaptive, and strategically relevant Civil Affairs Regiment.

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## **Supporting the Trickiest Task:**

*How Civil Affairs Can Bring Essential and Missing Capabilities to Geographic Combatant Command's Mandate to Prevent Conflict*

**Major Clay Daniels**  
**Morgan G. Keay**

Building on the 2015 Civil Affairs (CA) Roundtable theme, “Civil Affairs: A Force for Engagement and Conflict Prevention,” this paper reaffirms that the Civil Affairs (CA) community is uniquely positioned to clarify and enable the U.S. policy mandate and military task to prevent global conflict. Specifically, we assert that a properly prepared cadre of CA staff officers is needed to bring much-needed and missing conflict preventive capabilities to Geographic Combatant Command (GCC) HQs. To fill current gaps in GCC HQ-level conflict prevention *planning* and conflict prevention *assessment* capabilities, the CA community should train, educate, and assign a cadre of conflict prevention experts who are 1) knowledgeable on the principles of structural factors of fragility and how to mitigate fragility that leads to conflict, 2) skilled in joint staff processes, and 3) capable of employing basic data analysis, data science, and modeling in support of conflict preventive planning and assessments conducted by GCCs. To prepare such a cadre, we recommend conflict prevention be integrated into specific CA education, training, and professional development, and that trained CA personnel be assigned as conflict preventive focal points at GCC HQs. If adopted, Civil Affairs forces can better assist the GCCs in fulfilling their policy mandate to prevent conflict.

Perhaps more importantly, we believe this approach enables real preventive effects in the theater, thereby reducing or avoiding the comparatively high political and economic costs that would-be conflict poses to U.S. interests and resources.

The U.S. policy shift from a *reactive* to more *proactive* stance on global instability and pre-conflict engagement has been driven not only by moral ambition, but by the practical reality that the U.S. can neither afford – fiscally nor politically – to engage in perpetual warfare, nor to ignore simmering dynamics that have the potential to eventually threaten national or global security.<sup>1</sup> Preventing – not just responding to or mitigating conflict – first emerged as stated U.S. policy in the 2006 *Quadrennial Defense Review* (QDR), was reiterated in the 2014 QDR, and has gained traction as a policy objective ever since. The 2015 *U.S. National Security Strategy*, referring both to inter-state and intra-state conflict, identifies “Build(ing) Capacity to Prevent Conflict,” as a headline priority, and states, “We will continue to work ... to address the root causes of conflict before they erupt...”<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, current Department of Defense (DoD) guidance to all six GCCs identifies conflict prevention as a task of increasing importance.<sup>3</sup>

For Combatant Commanders and their staff, conflict prevention continues to be prioritized below more “urgent” crises, or met with skepticism and resistance. Indeed, conflict prevention can seem inherently counter-factual in nature. Stopping something from occurring may seem an existential paradox for staff officers tasked with planning and executing activities, let alone conducting assessments to measure the effects of something that ideally never transpires. The natural reluctance to embrace the task of con-

flict prevention is further exacerbated by the fact that doctrine and training remain vague on the topic, and staffing patterns have not adapted to embed conflict preventive expertise within GCC Headquarters (HQ). As such, GCCs lack sufficient staff capacity or functional capabilities to fulfill perhaps their trickiest national security mandate: conflict prevention.

This paper does not attempt to examine the academic discourse on conflict prevention nor argue for the merits of prevention in principle. The paper takes as its basis the fact that conflict prevention is already stated U.S. policy. That said; we present a brief overview of the concept of “structural prevention” as the evidence-based paradigm on which CA-supported GCC conflict prevention efforts must rest. Also of note is the fact that this paper focuses at the GCC HQ level. Naturally, our approach and recommendations have implications and relevance for subordinate commands and echelons, most notably Theater Special Operations Commands and Service Component Commands. We posit that the recommendations presented could be adapted for subordinate units, though such recommendations go beyond the scope of this paper.

## **Conflict Prevention as a Real Task**

From AFRICOM to PACOM, GCC staff officers confronting the directive to prevent conflict often struggle to understand the very meaning and existence of conflict prevention, much less how it relates to a Combatant Command. We assert that a useful starting point is the concept of “Structural Prevention,” which is the notion that the likelihood and/or intensity of violent conflict can be reduced or eliminated if the *structural factors* that place a society at high risk of conflict (i.e.

that create “fragility”) can be reduced, mitigated, or eliminated. Structural factors that create fragility vary considerably by context, but examples may include weak reach or legitimacy of state security providers, or structural discrimination of a certain ethnic or religious group.

An integral feature of structural prevention is the principle that factors of fragility can and should be empirically measured with evidence-based methods used to demonstrate a reduction in factors of fragility with an overall decrease in likelihood for conflict. Many social scientists have established qualitative and quantitative methods – many of them relying on big data and data science – to measure the link between fragility and violent conflict. Their findings show that by deliberately and actively addressing structural factors of fragility, a society, country, or community can be diverted off a pathway otherwise destined for violence. This underscores the tenet that conflict prevention is indeed an actionable – and measurable – task. Naturally, this has implications for GCC action.

## **Conflict Preventive Planning at the GCC**

Conflict prevention demands intent. In other words, mitigating structural factors of fragility that may lead to violence in a given society doesn’t typically happen by accident. Host governments, civil society, and local influencers are among the best positioned to identify and address factors in fragile societies that may lead to conflict. The actions and efforts of a GCC also have the ability to affect structural factors of fragility, and therefore help to prevent conflict.

In a 2014 RAND study by McNerney et al., *Assessing Security Cooperation as a Preventive Tool*,<sup>4</sup> a group of social scientists employed empirical methods to eval-

uate the link between GCC-led security cooperation (SC) activities and conflict prevention. They used data science to track correlations in country rankings on the State Fragility Index -- a global dataset that measures structural factors of fragility - with different types of SC over time. They investigated, for example, whether SC investments such as International Military Education & Training (IMET) or train & equip, could be linked to a positive drop in a country's fragility levels. This was based on their hypothesis that lower levels of fragility serve as a proxy for a country's proneness to violence and conflict.

The researchers used rigorous statistical regression models, and analyzed data from across all six GCCs over a ten-year period. They found that certain types of SC, employed in certain circumstances, could, in fact, be correlated with a reduction in the recipient country's fragility level, therefore supporting the hypothesis that GCCs could contribute to conflict prevention. Importantly, however, they found that only certain types of SC (e.g. IMET) functioned to reduce fragility -- and thus, contribute to conflict preventive outcomes -- in certain types of countries; specifically those with partial or fully democratic political systems. Train-and-equip programs employed in non-democratic countries, by contrast, have tended to *exacerbate* state fragility. The study found that Cold War-era SC in highly fragile, non-democratic countries was "associated with an increased probability of military coups, strengthened military regimes, and regional arms races"<sup>5</sup>.

Beyond SC, it is logical to infer that GCC-led exercises, engagements, and operations may also affect structural factors of fragility in specific countries or regions, thus contributing to a higher or lower likelihood of violent conflict in theater. For example, if a country



is analyzed as having a high level of structural fragility in the form of social cleavages along ethnic lines, Military Information Support Operations (MISO) may be an appropriate *operational* tool of prevention to help dispel harmful stereotyping between groups before tensions turn violent. Similarly, if mistrust between a partner nation's security forces and a marginalized minority group are identified as a structural factor likely to fuel conflict, a GCC could plan an exercise that intentionally brings the parties together around a cooperative scenario, such as disaster preparedness. But to achieve such preventive outcomes, GCCs must understand, consider, and deliberately plan to address structural factors of fragility -- aligning all "tools" at their disposal to the tricky task of conflict prevention.

At the GCC level, the two most important deliberate plans are Theater Campaign Plans (TCPs) and Crisis Action Plans (CAPs) -- both of which attempt to synchronize the various "tools" at a GCC's disposal -- namely operations, exercises, security cooperation (SC) activities, and other engagements (i.e. public affairs, senior leader engagements, conferences, etc.) -- around strategic objectives. Yet, despite a policy mandate to prevent conflict, GCCs have no standardized process to intentionally consider structural factors of fragility or to optimize the conflict preventive implications of TCPs or CAPs. We assert that this creates risk, but also presents an opportunity for the Civil Affairs community.

CA personnel who 1) understand Joint campaign planning doctrine and processes, 2) are trained in conflict preventive principles (i.e. the premise of structural prevention and how to identify critical factors of fragility), and 3) are able to translate analysis on structural fragility into recommendations for GCC deliberate plans, could help GCCs optimize their pre-

ventive outcomes and avoid inadvertent actions that fuel conflict in theater. Few, if any, GCCs have staff officers with this mix of qualifications. If adopted, the recommendations we put forth below, could prepare CA personnel to fill this gap.

## **Assessing Preventive Outcomes**

As important as GCC HQ plans are to fulfilling the conflict preventive mandate, so too are GCC assessments. Theater assessments measure the effectiveness, in aggregate, of a Combatant Command's achievement of strategic objectives. This is the optimal and most realistic level at which conflict preventive effects are likely to be achieved and meaningfully measured. For one, fragility data is most prevalent at the country level, and best understood in relation to other countries on a regional basis. Furthermore, the manpower, resources, operational tempo, and reporting cycles below the GCC HQ are generally not conducive to support an assessment of structural fragility. Indeed, few personnel in any GCC ecosystem – military or civilian – are likely to conduct conflict preventive-oriented assessments. This conflict resolution cadre may be best utilized at a GCC HQ level where they could engage most broadly.

Moreover, GCC HQs that gain proficiency to assess conflict preventive outcomes are best positioned to communicate these findings upward to the policy level. In September 2016, the Fragility Study Group<sup>6</sup>, a joint project of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, the Center for a New American Security (CNAS), and the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), recommended a new architecture to routinize how fragility is integrated into U.S. policy-making and legislation in support of the National Security

objective to prevent conflict. If adopted, these recommendations would affect how the National Security Council, Congress, and others make decisions and allocate resources with fragility indicators as a key basis and benchmark of that process. GCC theater assessments that feature -- on a recurrent and systematized basis -- indicators of structural fragility at the theater-wide and country levels, and Measures of Effectiveness (MoEs) that correlate GCC activities in aggregate to reductions in fragility, could represent one of the best data sources policy-makers have on conflict prevention across the U.S. interagency.

Conducting consequential assessments requires GCC HQs to have staff officers who 1) are skilled in theater assessment doctrine and processes, 2) are trained to collect or interpret existing data on structural factors of fragility, and 3) are able to define measures of effectiveness -- with accurate indicators -- that empirically correlate GCC activities with conflict prevention. Much like the capabilities described above in the planning category, few if any GCCs have personnel trained and qualified to assess structural conflict prevention specifically. Again, we submit that a select number of trained CA personnel should provide this missing capability, as discussed below.

### **Civil Affairs as a Natural Conflict Prevention Capability**

Often deployed or focused on contexts and circumstances not yet in violent conflict -- such as areas with latent instability -- CA personnel are naturally exposed to contexts with high structural factors of fragility, and are familiar with the processes and frameworks to understand and alter these factors. The CA

Methodology, the CAO Running Estimate, and Civil Information Management (CIM) processes serve as doctrinally defined mechanisms for CA personnel to collect and analyze factors in the human and social terrain that can fuel, or ideally be altered, to prevent a conflict trajectory.

At present though, Civil Affairs processes and efforts are not consistently, nor systematically, called upon to reveal structural factors of fragility in order to guide conflict preventive planning or assessments. The CA community is naturally poised to apply their own tools and methods in this manner, and to further enrich structural fragility insights with interagency (IA) and multi-stakeholder data.

With additional training, CA personnel could gain skills required to leverage this information in a way that informs military action planning and assessments. This would make CA a much-needed node for conflict prevention in the joint force. The ability for CA to collate such data on fragility factors is unmatched, while the ability to make sense of and infuse this knowledge into GCC HQ-level planning and assessment tasks is an as-yet unfilled role.

## **Recommendations**

In order to add value to current GCC HQ efforts to prevent conflict, we recommend the following three actions be embraced by the Civil Affairs community.

1) *Develop a Program of Instruction that covers the principles of conflict prevention (with particular focus on understanding structural factors of fragility), for integration into the Civil Affairs Qualification Course (CAQC) and expansion in an advanced CA course and training such as the Special Warfare Advanced Analysis and Targeting*

*Course (SWAATC) and the Security, Stability and Development in Complex Operations series.*

During initial and advanced training, CA personnel must gain the skills, knowledge, and expertise to analyze structural factors of fragility, and to translate this understanding into conflict preventive joint planning and assessment tasks. Intentional training and education on these topics would equip CA personnel with skills, as well as a vocabulary to improve the limited understanding and overcome the resistance to conflict prevention that exists throughout the joint force, including at GCC HQs. As such, CA could become a capable proponent not only for *why* to do conflict prevention, but *how* to do it effectively. This cadre of conflict prevention-oriented soldiers would serve an essential and missing function in the joint force's current ability to fulfill the tricky U.S. policy mandate to prevent conflict.

Beyond branch-specific training, it is imperative to send CA personnel to graduate and Joint Professional Military Education in preparation to best affect regional or theater level requirements. In addition to graduate civilian education, courses such as the School of Advanced Military Studies' Advanced Military Studies Program and the Advanced Strategic Planning and Policy Program, the Joint Forces Staff College's Joint Advanced Warfighting School, and the National Defense University's CAPSTONE course would allow CA officers the opportunity to increase Joint and strategic exposure and provide the time to apply graduate-level scholarship to the study and application of structural factors of instability and conflict prevention.

In sum, additional and targeted training is needed in order to expand upon the baseline skills and orientation of Civil Affairs, explicitly in support of the conflict prevention paradigm at the strategic level.

*2) CA personnel trained as above, familiar with Joint planning and assessment processes and; should be assigned – either on a permanent, temporary duty or remote support basis – to the GCC HQ staff to deliver as a conflict prevention capability.*

Using all appropriate staffing mechanisms, CA personnel – active and reserve – should be organized into a GCC staff division, for example within the J3 or J5, to provide concerted provision of conflict prevention expertise during key GCC HQ staff tasks related to plans, operations, exercises, and assessments. CA personnel specialized in conflict prevention should not be pooled in the J9, interagency, or partnership directorate, but should be an integral part of the various boards, bureaus, centers, cells, and working groups (B2C2WGs), and specifically tasked to support the theater campaign planning process, CAP development/review, SC programming, theater assessments, and various operations sections. In each case, conflict prevention-trained CA personnel should play a principal role in helping GCCs identify and understand priority factors of fragility, and work to synchronize and align GCC plans and activities towards mitigating those factors. Additionally, CA personnel should help to develop appropriate MoEs with rigorous metrics and indicators, and directly integrate these into the theater assessment framework. This GCC level cadre of CA personnel would have the added advantage of being able to reach back throughout the CA community to mine CIM and Civil Affairs operational data sets, as well as interagency and multi-stakeholder resources to enhance contribution to these tasks.

3) *CA Products and CIM processes should be refined to improve data mining, modeling, and visualization on structural factors of fragility in priority countries and targeted regions, and tailored to provide timely, relevant information to achieve conflict preventive outcomes. This analysis should serve as a critical input to the many B2C2WGs, operational planning teams, and strategic decision making at the GCC HQ and subordinate levels.*

Relevant data on structural factors of fragility, assessment and analytic frameworks for conflict prevention, and other tools are available from a multitude of sources such as IGOs, NGOs, and academic institutions. Indices and outlets such as the State Fragility Index, the Center for Systemic Peace, the CIA's Political Instability Task Force (PITF) are only a few of the datasets that already routinely track and report fragility factors, and should be integrated into GCC planning and assessments with the guidance of CA personnel. Additionally, adapting CIM capabilities and processes towards the growing need for data on structural fragility - and embracing new data analytic technologies and the use of "Big Data"-- would prove indispensable for GCC HQs, as well as subordinate echelons, when it comes to the tricky task of knowing where to focus and how to measure conflict prevention efforts. At present, the CAO running estimate and existing CIM capabilities are insufficient to process and operationalize the amount and type of information required for effective conflict prevention. Incorporating data science in CA processes, and embedding data-savvy CA personnel or remotely supporting GCC staff with this capability would be applicable not only to conflict prevention efforts, but the whole range of planning, operational, assessment, intelligence, and other tasks critical to a GCC's mission success.

## Conclusion

The Civil Affairs is naturally positioned to meaningfully address current deficiencies impeding GCCs' ability to fulfill the U.S. policy mandate to prevent conflict; a capability otherwise unavailable in the joint force. Doing so would add value to CA's most important customer – the GCCs – and advance unmet national security goals. Cultivating a true conflict preventive expertise in the CA community, however, requires branch-wide resolve and resources, as well as early and ongoing dialog with Combatant Commanders and their staff to better understand perceived gaps, and attune CA readiness and actions accordingly. We believe if the CA Regiment takes swift and intentional action to enhance branch training and education on conflict prevention, utilizes staffing mechanisms to provide Civil Affairs capabilities in conflict-prevention to the GCC HQs, and harnesses the power of new data technologies, the contribution CA can make to the tricky task of preventing violent conflict would be real and profound.

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# The Present and Emerging Spaces for Leveraging Civil Affairs

Colonel John C. Hope (retired)

There are emerging challenges to U.S. National Security on both sides of the Continental United States (CONUS). To the west, China is exerting itself seeking to become an eastern hegemon by laying claim to the whole of the South China Sea. China's actions are shaking the established order and structure in the entire region. To the east, revanchist Russia has annexed Crimea. While manipulating the crisis in eastern Ukraine, it has deployed forces to Syria, and is threatening western neighbors as it seeks to re-establish the sphere of influence it lost upon disintegration of the Soviet Union. Great Britain is exiting the European Union with other EU countries perhaps destined to follow. The migration crisis in Europe has its roots in the Middle East and in Africa, impacting migration patterns and issues around the globe. Yet in spite of these challenges, there is a dearth of U.S. Civil Affairs forces involved in operations in many of these forward areas. In this, it is a different world.

On February 6, 2015, President Barack Obama issued a new *National Security Strategy* to provide "a vision and strategy for advancing the nation's interests, universal values, and a rules-based international order through strong and sustainable American leadership."<sup>1</sup> A key requirement under a U.S. "whole of government approach" is to build capacity to prevent conflict. "We will strengthen U.S. and international capacity to prevent conflict among and within states... Within states, the nexus of weak governance

and widespread grievance allows extremism to take root, violent non-state actors to rise up, and conflict to overtake state structures.”<sup>2</sup> In the absence of armed conflict, all Civil Affairs (CA) and Civil Military Operations (CMO) require focused and unified efforts on Phase 0 Operations, “Shape” and Phase 1 Operations, “Deter.” The emerging Line of Effort (LOE) is “maneuver in complex civilian environment.” The new environment is transnational, multi-domain and multi-functional. All CA/CMO efforts must support decisive action for the commander. If we do not see this newly emerged environment, we will not see the emerging spaces requiring the leveraging of the full range of CA expertise.

What are the present and emerging spaces that Civil Affairs forces can leverage to best serve their most important clientele, the Geographic Combatant and Service Component Commands and Special Operations Command? I offer several areas for CA/CMO integration in Phase 0 and Phase 1 Operations. Critical to understanding the emerging spaces is an understanding of “Maneuver in a Complex Civilian Environment” and what GCCs/SCCs and SOC need from CA to Shape and Deter, starting with tactical CA capabilities and operational planning support.

### **Civil Information Management (CIM)**

The most glaring and critical unmet need is for Active Component (AC) and Reserve Component (RC) CA forces to provide their customers with Civil Information Management that will feed a centralized Civil-Military (Civ-Mil) Common Operational Picture (COP). Commander’s Critical Information Requirements are articulated to the J2 (Intelligence), the J3

(Operations) and the J5 (Plans). CA forces cannot provide coherent data to these sections to build a Civ-Mil COP. Currently, the AC and RC use a number of different CIM software databases. There is no uniformity for or amongst CIM users. The solution is for all CA forces to understand and use the chosen databases of their COCOM clientele. Specifically, RC CA forces need to be trained and effective in the customer's choice for CIM databases in order to contribute to the Civ-Mil COP. They must also be proficient to use CIM effectively and immediately upon arrival.

CA forces must understand that stand-alone CIM data is both worthless and meaningless. CA forces must be able to synthesize available data and convert it into a Civ-Mil COP, so that commanders at all levels can see and understand the information and make strategic, operational and tactical decisions based upon it. "CIM must feed the basic building block of analysis, not data. All CIM information must be compiled into a format of "so what," where leaders can be educated on the "who, what, when, where, and why" requirements needing to be leveraged."<sup>3</sup>

A functional Civ-Mil COP allows for the improved integration of CA planners who can then present options to the commander through the military decision making process (MDMP). CIM is CA's most critically needed battlefield operating system, but it is a long way from being standardized and effective to its primary customers, specifically in the shaping and deterring environments.

## **SOF CA and Conventional Force CA Integration**

U.S. Civil Affairs forces are facing a near-term crisis with the drawdown of the 85<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs Brigade, the only Active Component, General Purpose Force (GPF) unit in the Army inventory. “The 85<sup>th</sup> Brigade provides support to Forces Command (FORSCOM) by deploying Civil Affairs units in support of Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO), and provides a persistent Civil Affairs engagement capability to the Geographical Combatant Commanders (GCCs), Army Service Component Commanders (ASCCs) and United States Ambassadors in support of their theater engagement plans.”<sup>4</sup> Since the 85<sup>th</sup> Brigade’s activation on September 16, 2011, it has worked closely and collaboratively with the 95<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs Brigade, the Special Operations CA brigade, in all areas of civil military operations.

What is missing in the interaction is the intimate collaboration with RC CA forces. Relationship and functional issues between AC CA and RC CA must be immediately addressed for continuity of Civil Affairs Operations.

The onus is on the Civil Affairs Command working in each region to address this issue. AC CA forces and SOF CA forces must look into the near future and plan for the transfer of existing AC CA missions to RC CA forces. This effort must include coordination with the GCC/SCC and the ASCC J2, J3 and J5 entities to determine existing and emerging requirements. Conventional AC forces must determine the extent to which they can continue to support requirements in the face of the pending drawn down. Their appropriate commands must then submit a Request for Forces for RC

CA capabilities through FORSCOM to bridge identified gaps and to ensure RC CA support for emerging requirements in the newly evolving complex civilian environment.

As always, funding for RC CA support will be an issue. In the short term, OCO funds may be available on a limited basis. Other non-traditional funding sources, such as the European Reassurance Initiative (ERI), may be available. For the long term, GCC, ASCC and SOF planners and budgeters should build future requirements for RC CA using 10 U.S.C. 12304B funding. As stated in the law: “When the Secretary of a military department determines that it is necessary to augment the active forces for a preplanned mission in support of a combatant command, the Secretary may, subject to subsection (b), order any unit of the Selected Reserve (as defined in section 10143(a) of this title), without the consent of the members, to active duty for not more than 365 consecutive days.”<sup>5</sup>

There are two additional stipulations written into the law that state: “Units may be ordered to active duty under this section only if (A) the manpower and associated costs of such active duty are specifically included and identified in the defense budget materials for the fiscal year or years in which such units are anticipated to be ordered to active duty; and (B) the budget information on such costs includes a description of the mission for which such units are anticipated to be ordered to active duty and the anticipated length of time of the order of such units to active duty on an involuntary basis.”<sup>6</sup> There is a two-year lead-time to budget and access 12304B funding.

Regardless of budget issues, RC CA forces can immediately begin to forge relationships with their AC SOF brethren. This requires near-term command

guidance from the U. S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) and the U. S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (Airborne)(USACAPOC(A)), as well as communication and coordination within GCCs, or USACAPOC(A), and ASCCs. Under USACAPOC(A), the four Civil Affairs Commands (CACOMs) must take the lead in operational and tactical planning required to know and understand existing and emerging CA/CMO requirements. They must forge longer-term relationships with SOF and CF CA, and effect the transition of AC CA capabilities to RC CA forces. There is no time to lose without assuming significant risk for future CMO in support of GCCs, ASCCs and SOCOM.

### **Countering Hybrid and Transnational Threats**

The collaboration and fusion of AC and RC, SOF and GPF CA creates a united force to bear against the most lucrative Phase 0 and Phase 1 opportunities: countering hybrid threats and countering transnational threats (CTNT). Hybrid threats are NATO centric. “New strategic challenges by Russia and, to a degree, Daesh over the past year have NATO scrambling to respond. Both forces are revisionist, one seeking to alter the status quo of the European security order, the other to undo the Middle Eastern state structure established after WWI. These dual-pronged threats to NATO’s eastern and southern flanks are forcing the Alliance to adopt new strategic postures in response.”<sup>7</sup>

For the U.S. military “transnational threats are commonly referred to as organized crime, terrorism and cyber security. The U.S. Department of Defense defines transnational organized crime as those self-perpetuating associations of individuals who

operate transnationally for the purpose of obtaining power, influence, monetary and/or commercial gains, wholly or in part by illegal means, while protecting their activities through a pattern of corruption and/or violence, or while protecting their illegal activities through a transnational organizational structure and the exploitation of transnational commerce or communication mechanisms.”<sup>8</sup> CTNT is not EUCOM centric, and the U.S. government has stood up a number of new departments and agencies with counterterrorism capabilities, including the Department of Homeland Security, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, and the National Counterterrorism Center. Countering hybrid threats and CTNT will become more ubiquitous across all GCCs in the near future, because of the need to enable each other in addressing asymmetrical threats throughout the world.

Countering hybrid threats and CTNT are core Phase 0 and Phase 1 problems sets likely to be addressed on a comprehensive scale by combined CA forces in the future. CA is not required or likely capable of taking the lead on any singular CTNT program. However, CA forces possess wide ranges of skills and expertise that can be applied in an enabling mode to other U.S. agencies. In the absence of conflict, the entire spectrum of Phase 0 and Phase 1 activities belong to the Whole of Government, where CA can contribute its expertise to interagency subject matter experts.

## **CA and CIMIC Integration**

The U.S. military employs CA forces. Most of the European nations under the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) construct employ Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) forces. Limitless opportuni-



ties abound for CA to forge deeper relationships with NATO CIMIC partners. With Great Britain exiting the European Union, and with other countries likely to depart, NATO is the only organization capable of holding the whole of Europe together. CA and CIMIC are capable of coordinating and integrating Joint, interorganizational, and multinational (JIM) civil-military efforts in Phase 0 and Phase 1. NATO is currently launching initiatives under “countering hybrid threats” focusing on migration issues, including Stability and Reconstruction, Population Protection, Protecting Women and Children in Conflict and Cultural Property Protection. USACAPOC(A) would be well served to provide a liaison at the NATO CIMIC Center of Excellence (CCOE) to enhance cooperation and coordination for all CA/CIMIC interactions. Many other nations and the United Nations employ some form of CA- or CIMIC-like forces that does not fall under a branch or a discipline the U.S. and NATO. Regardless of the naming convention, there is space for U.S. CA to engage with these forces as with NATO.

## **The Interagency**

The Whole of Government (WOG) environment offers a plethora of opportunities for CA forces to support the interagency, specifically in Countering Transnational Threats. CA forces offer the perfect partnering capability for interagency integration across a wide spectrum. “Within the context of DOD involvement, interagency coordination is the coordination that occurs between elements of DOD and engaged USG agencies for the purpose of achieving an objective. Interagency coordination forges the vital link between the U.S. military and the other instruments

of national power.”<sup>9</sup> CA forces are routinely involved in GCC/SCC missions and exercises providing both tactical forces and planning support. We need only to examine the interagency spaces to find new opportunities to engage with USG partners in Phase 0 and Phase 1 operations.

GCCs/SCCs offer significant opportunities for CA involvement outside of kinetic operations. For example, the Interagency Partnering Directorate (J9) at USEUCOM has 12 interagency partners, all of whom engage in countering transnational threats in some way. EUCOM has current initiatives in the areas of Women, Peace and Security, Humanitarian Mine Awareness, and Public Private Partnerships, with a primary focus on Eastern European nations. Other opportunities abound, with the most obvious linkages to development and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response (HA/DR) through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA). USACAPOC(A) would be well served to have a permanent liaison at USAID to develop opportunities to expand CA opportunities for WOG interagency interactions.

### **National Guard State Partnership Program Integration**

The State Partnership Program (SPP) is a Department of Defense security cooperation program run by the National Guard Bureau (NGB). “The SPP relates to several areas of potential interest to Congress, including improving the capabilities of partner nations to protect their citizens; strengthening relationships with partners to facilitate cooperation, access, and interoperability; improving cultural awareness and

skills among U.S. military personnel; and fostering the integration of reserve and active component forces into a “total force.”<sup>10</sup> The SPP is yet another space in which CA forces can seek collaboration. For example, SPP executes engineering and building projects in host partner countries along with the training of host nation military personnel. Both offer CA forces the ability to collaborate with the SPP and provide CA support to the National Guard. The Guard does not have organic CA assets, leaving it little ability to perform civil reconnaissance and civil engagement in support of SPP priorities in these countries. It should, instead, draw its CA support from established Army CA commands as AC commands already do.

### **Mission and Exercise Support**

In Phase 0 and Phase 1 Operations, mission and exercise support is the bread and butter of RC visibility, competency and support to the GCC/SCC readiness. Traditionally, RC CA has played a major role by its participation, but there exists more space for effective execution. Specifically, RC CA must prepare to take the lead from AC CA for CMO planning and exercise integration at all Combat Training Centers (CTCs), in addition to its traditional mission and exercise participation and support.

In the rapidly changing global environment, RC CA needs to improve on mission and exercise preparation. It needs to show up ready to “plug and play” and be an effective enabler to the Ccdr and the SOC Commander. To achieve this goal, RC participants must be involved in the exercise academics and Master Scenario Events List (MSEL) conferences. In addition, RC CA representation is critical at initial, mid and final planning conferences. Attendance at these

events must be built in to RC Annual Training (AT) plans, and more importantly, they need to be budgeted. Attending a MSEL or planning conference burns AT days, as do participation in the exercise itself. Several large exercises require more than the 14 days of AT allocated per Soldier per year. Thus, other types of funding such as Active Duty for Training (ADT) must also be budgeted, utilized and managed.

In order to be the most effective enablers upon arrival, RC CA leaders and personnel must also do their pre-deployment homework. Such homework must include familiarization with their GCC Theater Campaign Plan (TCP) and Theater Campaign Order (TCO), as well as familiarization with the Country Cooperation Plans (CCPs) for those ally and partner nations involved a given exercise. CACOM CA Planning Teams (CAPTs) and Civil Liaison Teams (CLTs) should be executing their AT at their GCCs/SCCs. They should remain current on events shaping plans and engagements, and transfer this knowledge to their home units. CA forces must widen their aperture to contribute their skills and expand their knowledge of their COCOM and supported command partner priorities through enhanced internal communication and by maintaining constant situational awareness in the area of operation.

## **Conclusion**

GCCs/SCCs provide the requirements that give CA its legitimacy and purpose. The GCCs/SCCs also provide unparalleled training venues for conventional CA Active and Reserve forces and Special Operations Forces CA forces. The changing environment calls for new initiatives with CIMIC and civil-military forces

from other nations. AC SOF and RC Conventional CA must rapidly align their planning and execution to best serve their major clients. Countering hybrid and transnational threats presents new and complex problem sets for all CA forces to address, both as a single discipline and under the WOG approach, nested within the interagency environment. Integration with the National Guard State Partnership Program offers additional space for SOF and CF Civil Affairs to interact and collaborate on behalf of supported commands. All elements of CA will continue to be involved in missions and exercises, to include CTCs rotations; but, despite keeping the 85th CA Brigade, the demand on RC CA will increase. RC CA forces must bring their best game when supporting missions and exercises and conducting CA planning, and must resolve issues with Civil Information Management. CA must be prepared for new and spontaneous problem sets. And lastly, they must be prepared to support decisive actions at all levels of CMO for their supported commands.

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# **Changing the Business Model: Leveraging Civil Affairs as an Instrument of Defense Support to Diplomacy and Development**

**Major Shafi Saiduddin  
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Rapid, exponential changes in technology are dramatically reshaping the systems and processes of human societies. The technological revolution is as disruptive to the world order today as industrialization was at the dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Unanswered questions include what the concepts of governance and conflict will look like with the traditional Westphalian nation-state in decline and the power of non-state actors on the incline. The global economy is evolving rapidly, bringing with it instability and new patterns of migration. These changes are characterized by complexity and non-linear systems, where adapting to these new challenges is beyond the capability of traditional linear military structures. Traditional linear military structures are based on rigid, top down hierarchy and transparent doctrine, which obfuscates winning wars in these complex systems.

Civil Affairs (CA) is a capability ideally suited for dealing with complexity; however, leveraging CA is hindered by cultural and institutional barriers within our military. It will require a paradigm shift in how the defense community conceptualizes Civil Affairs. A change in the CA business model and the application of CA operational art must be accomplished before its potential can be fully realized.

The U.S. military is designed to fight conventional wars against regular state actors, but has struggled



with irregular intrastate conflicts such as in Afghanistan. Unlike the rest of the Joint Force, CA forces are inherently designed for addressing irregular conflict, working by, with, and through indigenous populations and a wide variety of state and non-state actors in support of the campaign objectives of the Geographic Combatant Command (GCC). Thus, CA is uniquely well suited for dealing with complex problems in non-linear systems, such as identifying and leveraging partnerships and relationships with those who have mutually aligned interests in any region of the world.

The problem, however, is the persistent difficulty in leveraging the joint strategic influence and engagement capabilities of CA, regardless of whether these forces are active duty or reserve. For the past decade the U.S. military has had, at best, moderate success with leveraging influence and engagement capabilities from its non-kinetic formations, yet incredible success in leveraging precise, surgical strike capabilities from its kinetic formations. It is therefore worthwhile to examine the changes that surgical strike capabilities have made in terms of the current military organizational culture and force structure, in many cases incorporating methodologies from civilian industry.

In order to complement and fill the gaps of traditional military approaches to achieving strategic effects such as drone strikes, the model to employ CA forces must change. It can no longer mirror the tactical, linear construct of the conventional forces it supports. It must become more of a strategic network of decentralized teams more closely aligned with civilian agencies and other special operational forces that conduct tactical operations in concert with each other that seek to achieve strategic effects.

Therefore, pursuant to these approaches, the main purpose of this paper is to explore the nature of how CA employs operational art in order to influence desired, strategic outcomes in complex, non-linear systems as part of enduring shaping operations around the world as an instrument of defense support to diplomacy and development.

### **Civil Affairs Approach to SOF Operational Art**

To fully appreciate the value that CA brings to the arena of strategic influence and engagements, it is necessary to examine how persistent engagements need to be thought of in terms of grand strategy. If strategy is about balancing risks associated with ends, ways, and means, then grand strategy is, more often than not, about “the ability to adjust to the reality that resources will and interests inevitably find themselves out of balance in some areas.”<sup>1</sup> For example, this means that if the current U.S. National Security Strategy advocates building capacity to prevent conflict, then what is needed is an approach that ties into a grand strategy that ultimately supports U.S. national interests. Civil Affairs, in this particular case, needs to be ubiquitous in complex, non-linear systems by utilizing Special Operations Forces (SOF) Operational Art through persistent engagements of civic leaders abroad in what needs to be thought of as defense support to diplomacy and development.

CA approaches SOF Operational Art with the intention of influencing a targeted center of gravity, usually grievances with governance either real or perceived. Joint doctrine defines “approach” as the manner in which the commander contends with the center of gravity, either directly at the source of power, or

indirectly at a series of decisive points that is designed to defeat the center of gravity while avoiding the enemy's strength.<sup>2</sup> In Special Operations indirect and direct approaches are more clearly expressed as Special Warfare and Surgical Strike concepts.<sup>3</sup>

Special Warfare is the execution of activities that involve a combination of lethal and nonlethal actions taken by a specially trained and educated force. It has a deep understanding of cultures and foreign language, proficiency in small-unit tactics, and the ability to build and fight alongside indigenous combat formations in permissive, semi-permissive, or non-permissive environments.<sup>4</sup> This is the niche where CA is most comfortable in working with partners that have mutually aligned interests that seek to leverage those resources critical to securing and preserving U.S. national interests abroad.

Surgical Strike is the execution of activities in a precise manner that employ special operations forces in hostile, denied, or politically sensitive environments to seize, destroy, capture, exploit, recover or damage designated targets, or influence threats.<sup>5</sup> Surgical Strike is quite popular among decision-makers and has become the dominant element in the utilization of special operations forces over the past decade because of the reliance upon precise lethal targeting. Surgical Strike, as an approach concept in SOF Operational Art, fits neatly within industrial era military processes and organizations due to the time honored concept of reducing the *friction* and uncertainty of combat, thus creating relative superiority for small units.<sup>6</sup> Friction is what Clausewitz calls the "force that makes the apparently easy so difficult."<sup>7</sup> It is important to understand that in terms of SOF Operational Art, friction is complexity and to ignore the certainty of unpredict-

ability in military operations is to suffer friction's unintended consequences.

## **Overcoming Military Cultural Biases**

CA forces are recognized as the military's regional and cultural experts, so it is ironic that the greatest obstacle to leveraging CA is a cultural issue within our own military. The Army in particular, has a cultural bias towards combat arms and Combined Arms Maneuver as illustrated in the recent U.S. Army War College 2016 Elihu Root study presenting a broad analysis of the security environment and examining the Army's ability to execute its full range of missions.<sup>8</sup> One of its conclusions is that "the institutional bias toward the Combined Arms Maneuver sector of the Regular Army inhibits the Total Army's ability to present the full range of potential options to policy makers."<sup>9</sup> This bias tends to focus the Army towards the tactical and operational levels and on the Phase III mission, leaving vulnerabilities at the strategic level. By choosing to "prepare for and focus on high-end combat, even while the strategic environment forecasts the need for a more diverse set of capabilities the Army downplays the array and importance of other specialized functions, capabilities, and missions through which the Army serves the nation and its allies."<sup>10</sup> This bias has made integrating strategic influence and engagement difficult, even though the face of conflict is changing and the roles of influence and engagement have grown into national security priorities.

As a result, the effective execution of concepts such as the Army Functional Concept for Engagement and Regionally Aligned Brigades remain elusive. The combat arms bias is also evident in the Special Operations

community through a disproportionate emphasis on Surgical Strike in force structure and resourcing.

This bias is particularly problematic in the context of the both the 2010 and 2015 *Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Reviews*. Both reviews stress the elevation of Development as a pillar of National Security on par with diplomacy and defense.<sup>11</sup> Both studies reiterate the need for increased collaboration between Department of State and Department of Defense (DoD) in areas such as conflict prevention.<sup>12</sup> This cultural bias towards combat arms goes beyond the military and reflects the attitudes of our national security establishment in general.

If the pillars of national security are viewed as a three-legged stool, one leg is decidedly longer. Militarization of foreign policy, or perhaps more accurately, “de-civilianization,” is problematic as it limits the ability to leverage all aspects of national power.<sup>13</sup> While many of the national security issues faced by the US require non-military solutions, the tool at the disposal of policy makers is primarily the military. Beyond the imbalance in national security capabilities, in a militarized defense construct, it falls to DoD to generate effects in the areas of diplomacy and development. In over a decade of conflict in Iraq and Afghanistan, DoD has fared poorly in these areas. While not an ultimate solution to the imbalance, CA is in a position to serve as the “bridge” between DoD and the interagency, and support to diplomacy and development agencies. of civilian agencies.

## Overcoming Organizational and Structural Barriers

Beyond the cultural bias, the very structures and processes required to execute Combined Arms Maneuver are at odds with the requirements for strategic influence and engagement. The structure of the Joint Force is a product of the Industrial Revolution and the concept of modern industrial warfare. The underlying concept can be described as *reductionist efficiency*.<sup>14</sup> This entails aligning discrete tasks in the most efficient manner possible and adding predictability to the equation, underlying the assembly line processes that define the post-industrial revolution manufacturing industry. The modern U.S. military is based on the precision execution of tasks, the interchangeability of personnel, and the predictability of future events.<sup>15</sup> These concepts are applicable to dominating a maneuver battlefield and combining a variety of capabilities such as infantry, armor, artillery, and airpower. But they are fruitless in complex, non-linear systems.

The systems involved in maneuver warfare can be best described as *complicated* as they are essentially a mix of linear systems and require structure and oversight to operate efficiently.<sup>16</sup> This model is based on each element of the equation completing discrete tasks all the while being directed by a commander who seemingly has a view of the larger picture. The commander, while often distant from the battlefield, becomes the decision-maker driving the organization.

Systems based on this concept of reductionist efficiency have struggled in an era of globalized complexity. The U.S. automobile industry provides examples of organizations that had to radically reshape their business models in order to survive. National level special mission units have also had to adapt to com-

plexity, using many of the same principles adopted by civilian industry, including embracing the concepts of shared consciousness and empowered execution.<sup>17</sup>

Shared consciousness describes the transparency of information throughout an organization and the breaking down of *silos* or compartments among functional specialties. In the industrial era, a linear system of compartmented functions directed by an executive led to efficiency. In an environment characterized by interconnectedness and speed, this model impedes adaptability. General Motors endured costly failures due to compartmented systems; Ford changed their structure by building multifunctional teams with open communication.<sup>18</sup>

Empowered execution occurs when these teams, with wide access to the organization's information, function by making decisions independently with minimal oversight by an executive. These changes, while at odds with traditional industrial age hierarchy and processes, allow larger organizations to scale the agility of a small team and match the speed and complexity of their operating environments. Civilian industries have now widely adopted these concepts in order to address the challenges of globalization. For the defense community, leveraging engagement as a grand strategy requires adaptive and proactive organizations that are both comfortable and capable of engaging, assessing, and influencing within the ever-changing complexity of the interconnected world.

CA, in terms of its mission and methods of operation, has less in common with the military than it does with civilian agencies such as the Department of State or the U.S. Agency for International Development. Similar to these organizations, CA must be adaptive and proactive, engaging, assessing, and influencing in

flux with the ever-changing complexity of the interconnected world. Thus, leveraging CA is ultimately a factor of overcoming barriers that are inherent in current military and organizational cultures.

### **Changing the Business Model of Civil Affairs**

CA is in a unique position to adopt post-industrial organizational methodologies. Always among the smallest branches of the Army, attempts to expand it have not been successful. The Army's near-deactivation of the only active duty CA brigade aligned with conventional forces clearly illustrates the Army's culture and its willingness to accept risk in the area of strategic influence and engagement. If the Army had cut this force, mass-producing the traits and skills needed in the current complex, operating environment is not possible. Rather than continuing down a path of trying to expand the force, CA should instead focus on the advantages of having a small force in terms of the ability to institute shared consciousness and empowered execution. Quality has its own quality: The small size of the CA Regiment is a strength that makes it adaptable and amenable to a flatter, more agile non-linear security landscape.

While the majority of the U.S. military generates effects through large formations, the CA basic unit of maneuver is the team, from which CA generates strategic effects. Decentralized, multifunctional teams, empowered to execute with minimal direction, are agile and adaptable and, thus, well suited to the complexity of the constantly evolving operating environment.<sup>19</sup> CA teams can affect strategic, operational, and tactical environments simultaneously in ways that traditional military structures cannot. The concept of the strategic CA team is somewhat of a paradox as traditional



military structures view small deployable units as tactical, while large planning and analytical structures are viewed as being operational or strategic. Yet, CA teams working in coordination with interagency and host nation partners can achieve both national level and campaign level objectives in addition to other tactical considerations, anticipated or otherwise.

Complexity, interconnectedness, and speed all work against the predictive and planning capabilities of traditional staff organizations. Commanders and their staffs will generally have less nuanced information than the teams on the ground. They are not able to adapt quickly to rapidly changing events that are signatures of non-linear systems. Thus, CA teams on the ground are best aware of situational context and socio-cultural nuances that cannot be effectively communicated in situation reports. A planning cell should be thought of less in terms of providing direction for teams, and more in terms of providing support for teams through access to other capabilities and agencies.

Leveraging CA capability requires empowering the team and flattening mission command so it is team-centric and team focused. Mirroring industrial era conventional structures and practices ultimately hinders the effectiveness of teams. Embedding CA units within conventional commands and aligning teams as maneuver enablers in the same manner as Artillery or Engineers, limits the effectiveness of the team in shaping the strategic environment. It paradoxically deprives the commander of the effects sought. The current model for supporting conventional forces results in an excess of battalion and brigade structures which add extra layers of bureaucracy and encourage the prioritization of palpable metrics over qualitative aspects of engagement.

Similarly, mirroring the traditional Army personnel development system hinders the CA Regiment's ability to manage talent. Career progression models that emphasize a command track do not support an engagement strategy requiring expert regional and cultural knowledge and a network of connections with Civilian Unified Action Partners. Broadening the professional breadth of assignments, such as interagency fellowships and training with industry, lends more to a strategy of engagement. A dual track Foreign Area Officer (FAO) program for Active and Reserve Component CA would also further integration with Joint, Interorganizational, and Multinational (JIM) partners. Such positions should be considered as Key Developmental and career enhancing assignments for CA officers. In the current "zero growth" paradigm, a decrease in the number of Reserve CA battalions and brigades may be necessary to allow creation of new liaison and FAO authorizations. This improves the ratio of teams to command structures and allows for the creation of new types of teams, task organized to better support engagement priorities.

CA sits apart from other Joint military branches as well, due mostly to an increase in advanced civilian education among the non-commissioned officer corps. Distance learning is replacing the traditional brick-and-mortar institutions for higher education and the non-commissioned officers are leveraging time and available funding to close the educational gap that currently exists between themselves and their commissioned counterparts. Thus, it is time to also recognize that more opportunities for training with industry or academic fellowships should be inclusive of the non-commissioned officer corps as well as for the commissioned officer. It is wise to recognize that blurring the

lines of advanced civilian education across the span of CA formations, both Active and Reserve ultimately increases the capacity for reducing uncertainty in non-linear systems and complex terrains.

CA cannot generate effects unilaterally. It must work through and with civilian partners. Better integration with interagency partners is essential in building an effective CA business model; yet, interagency functions exist in their own silos, and military engagement with the interagency tends to be episodic rather than persistent. The key to success for CA integration within interagency partners will be in understanding internal nuances and overcoming organizational culture barriers inherent in these linear bureaucratic structures. The interagency model is itself fluid and complex. Yet, all actors within these systems adapt to shared norms and seek to influence, if not counter-balance, other state and non-state actors in similar non-linear systems.<sup>20</sup>

Thus, agendas will always be in competition with one other, reducing the overall effectiveness of the oft-touted *whole of government* approach. This is certainly a strategic obstacle that CA must overcome in order to be strategically effective, particularly in Phase 0. This can be mitigated though advanced exchange programs that grant interagency partners greater access to CA and vice versa. The Civil Military Advisory Group (CMAG), a Special Operations Command program, was a platform designed for engagement with the interagency. The original concept has changed, however, as this model could be applied to a multi-component organization serving as the next step in long-term persistent engagement with the interagency. Persistent engagement with the interagency requires a permanent presence in the National Capital

Region and should involve representatives from Active, Reserve, and National Guard CA, as well as other influence capabilities, such as Military Information Support, Information Operations, and Cyberwarfare.

### **Cultural Barriers within the CA Community**

Executing a new business model for CA will require trust and a sense of common purpose, both of which are currently lacking within the CA community today.<sup>21</sup> One of the most divisive issues within the CA Regiment is the SOF/Conventional divide, exacerbated by dual training standards within the force. CA should be viewed as inherently a Special Operations function, both by the DoD definition of Special Operations, and by the unique methods required to recruit, select, train, and grow a CA operator.<sup>22</sup> Civil Affairs operations across the entire spectrum of conflict are typically carried out in politically sensitive environments, with and/or through indigenous forces, and require regional expertise. Operating in small teams, often in low visibility operations, CA incurs a high degree of physical risk. Networks developed by CA provide access to denied areas, and CA activities are, as a matter of course, synchronized with interagency partners. The perception that Special Operations is primarily related to kinetic actions is more a continuation of the military cultural bias towards combat arms, than an analysis of doctrine.

Recognizing CA as inherently a strategic, Special Operations capability does not preclude CA units from serving under conventional commands, nor from specializing in missions that support conventional forces. However, CA will ultimately require a more effective model for supporting conventional forces that em-

powers teams to achieve strategic objectives through tactical approaches. CA is an integral part of the Joint Force and involved in nearly all operations at all levels. But this integration can only come through a concept of SOF/Conventional CA force interdependence rather than the wholesale integration of CA units into the linear conventional force structure.<sup>23</sup>

### **Recommendations:**

In summary, among the main recommendations of this paper are:

1. Develop CA operational art as a subset of SOF and Joint "Phase 0" operational art.
2. Implement a new career development model for officers and NCOs that preserves regional and cultural expertise through liaison programs and fellowships, and de-emphasizes a command track.
3. Improve the team/command structure ratio in order to empower teams and decentralize operations. Convert excess battalion and brigade positions to interagency liaison and FAO authorizations.
4. Develop a multi-component CA platform, based on the initial concept of the Civil Military Advisory Group, as a vehicle for interagency engagement. Partner with other DoD influence capabilities to increase engagement with the interagency through a permanent presence in the National Capital Region.
5. Eliminate the SOF/Conventional distinction in Civil Affairs. Unify the training pipeline for Active and Reserve CA. Redesign the maneuver

support aspect of the force in terms of a team-centric, conventional-SOF interdependence, model.

## **Conclusion**

Despite the fact that institutional biases within the conventional force will continue to impact CA force structure and employment, CA must support the conventional force all the same. It seems counter-intuitive, but these goals may be achieved more effectively by a shift from persistent engagement with conventional forces, and to some degree from the military writ large, to a stronger alignment with civilian agencies. That is where CA can serve as DoD's bridge to implement holistic approaches. Cultural barriers within the U.S. military are unlikely to change; however, a coherent narrative can educate the military customer base and gain their support for the proper integration and application of CA capabilities.

CA is in many ways incompatible with the reductionist efficiency based systems of industrialized warfare and much more compatible with civilian agencies that conduct diplomatic and development activities. The role of CA in security cooperation activities, for example, makes this a natural fit as missions, such as unconventional warfare and foreign internal defense, are typically in support of civilian agencies.

Leveraging Civil Affairs requires less structural thinking as enablers or force multipliers and more efforts towards developing a business model that adapts to complexity within non-linear markets. Ultimately, Joint Force commanders require the strategic, operational, and tactical effects CA generates, not necessarily the presence of CA in their force struc-

ture. Lt. Gen. (ret.) Charles Cleveland and Col. (ret.) David Maxwell, describe the problem set well: “We have a strategy gap between diplomacy and war fighting, and the U.S. government must become adept at statecraft orchestrating political warfare activities to achieve objectives using all means necessary, including and beyond diplomacy but short of war. Special Warfare can provide a strategic capability to operate in this gap.”<sup>24</sup>

Under a new business model, CA should be packaged and sold to its customer base as defense support to diplomacy and development while supporting a grand strategy through targeted strategic influence and engagements alongside interagency partners.

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# **Disrupting Dark Networks in Central America: USSOUTHCOM Leverages Civil Affairs to Meet the Challenge**

**Lieutenant Colonel Steve Lewis**

Today, combatant commanders face the emergence of a complex network of malign state surrogates and non-state actors seeking to destabilize a region, hobble U.S. foreign policy, and manipulate the operational environment in weak states for their own nefarious ends.<sup>1</sup> These threat networks, commonly called red networks<sup>2</sup> or *dark networks*<sup>3</sup>, operate across national borders and regional boundaries, leverage technology to operate globally, adapt quickly to military and law enforcement efforts, and actively seek to exacerbate state weaknesses. They are transnational, trans-regional, and connected through an intricate system of facilitators, brokers, middlemen, and corruptible public officials. Their operational environment (OE) is less predictable, more disordered, and changing at a greater pace than ever before, leveraging its disordered and dynamic nature to challenge U.S. dominance without directly challenging U.S. strength.<sup>4</sup> They include violent extremist organizations (VEO), transnational criminal organizations (TCO), and every hybrid group in between.<sup>5</sup> Their cooperation can be temporary, tangential, or deliberate or may simply extend to the simultaneous use of common facilitators and middlemen, but their objectives are remarkably consistent—shape the OE for their own purposes. In many cases, their illicit commodities smuggled and violent actions are secondary dangers compared to their ability to manipulate vulnerable populations, degrade

and corrupt partner nations' public institutions, and destabilize a region. They are "unraveling the social fabric of the community of nations."<sup>6</sup> Because these groups operate across geographic, organizational, and domain boundaries and adapt to efforts by any single state security actor with ease, combatant commanders must seek new approaches and strategies to address this growing challenge. They must improve their understanding of not only the dark networks but also all relevant networks (blue, green, and white)<sup>7</sup> and how they interact, and then they must design operations and activities that isolate and disrupt dark networks.<sup>8</sup>

Within these strategies, the involvement of Civil Affairs (CA) is absolutely essential, along three critical tasks to support the strategic objectives of a combatant commander's campaign plan to understand and disrupt dark networks. There are several successful examples of how the U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) has leveraged CA to conduct these key tasks in support of theater strategic objectives.

## **SOUTHCOM's Operational Environment**

SOUTHCOM is the U.S. Department of Defense's Combatant Command with an area of responsibility (AOR) of Central and South America and the Caribbean.<sup>9</sup> The commander of SOUTHCOM has stated that dark networks represent SOUTHCOM's "overarching security challenge."<sup>10</sup>

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Central America suffered under authoritarian regimes, brutal civil wars, and an intransigent class struggle between the haves and have-nots.<sup>11</sup> This has left Central America with a plethora of violent armed groups, weak government institutions, a lack of civil infrastructure and social

services, and a scarcity of economic opportunities all creating a population that is poor, disenfranchised, unhealthy, and vulnerable to the manipulation of malign actors.<sup>12</sup> Ongoing violence and instability in Central America fuels the expansion of threat networks and represents a direct threat to the security of the United States.<sup>13</sup> Groups like the FARC (communist guerillas), MS13 (criminal gang), and the Zetas (Mexican criminal cartel) have global connections, seek weak states to corrupt, create shadow governments to maintain control, and intimidate and manipulate vulnerable populations, all to recast the OE for their own nefarious ends.<sup>14</sup>

Within the SOUTHCOM AOR, several additional networks are relevant. The Blue Network is U.S. Government (USG) organizations including USSOUTHCOM and its components, as well as U.S. embassies and agencies working within these embassies. The Green Network consists of government organizations and civil and military institutions, of partner nations (PN). Perhaps the most relevant is the White Network, which consists of the local population and organizations such as churches, non-governmental organizations (NGO), and local community organizations.

## **SOUTHCOM's Strategy**

SOUTHCOM's vision is to support U.S. national security objectives in the western hemisphere in partnership with other USG and international organizations in order to foster security, ensure stability, and promote prosperity throughout Central and South America, the Caribbean, and the global community. The commander's vision includes three main themes: SOUTHCOM must be the regional Partner of Choice,

must be prepared and capable of a Rapid Response to all contingencies, and must constantly seek understanding and disruption of Transregional Threat Networks.<sup>15</sup> Within these themes are crosscutting activities that include understanding the OE, building partner-nation capacity, and supporting USG inter-agency and appropriate international organizations missions.<sup>16</sup>

Because engaging the White Network is a critical element of this strategy, CA, the military capability specifically created to engage the human domain, is essential to SOUTHCOM's strategy. As dark networks need a vulnerable population to gain safe haven and access to infrastructure, resources, recruits, information, and influence over the OE,<sup>17</sup> the engagement and protection of vulnerable populations is central to a strategy to disrupt these dark networks.

### **SOUTHCOM's Civil Affairs Toolbox**

SOUTHCOM and its components have created a broad civil affairs community of interest integrated with other SOUTHCOM elements, especially military information support operations (MISO) and information operations. One of the key CA elements USSOUTHCOM has included is the U.S. Special Operations Command, which created and funded the Civil Military Engagement program. This program deploys CA teams called Civil Military Support Elements (CMSEs) from the 95th CA Brigade, under the operational control (OPCON) of Special Operations Command-South (SOCSOUTH). SOUTHCOM created its own program similar to CMSE called the Civil Affairs Engagement Program (CAEP). These teams have been sourced by both Active Component (AC)

soldiers from the 85th CA Brigade (part of U.S. Forces Command) and Reserve Component (RC) soldiers sourced from the 350th CA Command. CAEP teams are also under operational control of SOCSOUTH. Marine Forces South (MARFORSOUTH) fields CA teams drawn primarily for the USMC RC, and it also deploys a Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force (SPMAGTF) with a CA component with civil engagement and humanitarian assistance responsibilities. From 2012 to 2014, U.S. Navy Maritime CA teams from the U.S. Navy Expeditionary Command also supported SOUTHCOM. The permanent Joint Task Force (JTF-Bravo) stationed at Soto Cano Air Force Base, Honduras, has humanitarian assistance and disaster response responsibilities and serves as a platform for civic action programs.

## **Key Tasks for Civil Affairs**

### **Task 1: Understand the human domain.**

*“Gaining a better understanding of the intertwined nature of these networks is our biggest challenge. We have, at best, an incomplete picture of how this all fits together.”<sup>18</sup>*

The first essential task for CA is to expand the command’s understanding of the OE, especially in the human domain. It is essential for a CA team not only to design follow-on civic action projects but also to expand the broader enterprise’s understanding of the human domain to ensure synchronization of all efforts. This process is called civil reconnaissance (CR) and civil information management (CIM), and it is essential to understanding, and thus defeating, dark networks.<sup>19</sup> In the SOUTHCOM AOR, threat networks

manipulate vulnerable populations to gain an operational advantage. The way they manipulate specific communities varies as much as the types of threat groups in the AOR. Dark networks seek out popular grievances and social ills to manipulate vulnerable groups.<sup>20</sup> However, each community is different and must be understood at a granular level. Thus, thorough and disciplined CR and CIM are essential. The only way to effectively mitigate the advantage gained by dark networks is to understand the “civil vulnerabilities” that dark networks manipulate.<sup>21</sup>

An example of thorough CR and CIM leading to a broader understanding of the OE can be found in Guatemala (GTM). GTM is a key route for illicit trafficking of narcotics and other illicit goods. Mexican cartels work with local criminal organizations (*transportistas*) to move illicit goods northward through GTM.<sup>22</sup> Since 2011, SOUTHCOM has maintained persistent CA teams, made up of CMSE and CAEP teams, in GTM. These teams work with Guatemala Military (GTMMIL) units along the borders. Over the last five years, these teams have developed a clearer understanding of the civil vulnerabilities of communities along GTM’s border with Mexico, Honduras, and El Salvador. In some cases, local government institutions, corrupted by dark networks, have intentionally limited Guatemalan government services from reaching these communities. This was part of an intentional strategy by dark networks to delegitimize the Guatemalan government and further isolate populations, making them more vulnerable to the dark networks’ intimidations and manipulations. Based on solid CR and CIM, SOUTHCOM and SOCSOUTH developed an understanding of the dark networks manipulation process, enabling SOUTHCOM to partner with the

GTMMIL, the Government of GTM (GoG), and the U.S. Country Team to better design civic action programs that reinforce the legitimacy of the GoG.

A second example of effective CR and CIM leading to more effective operations can be found in Honduras (HND). Several minority communities that exist along the Atlantic coast of HND are leveraged by narco-traffickers. These communities have historically held a deep distrust of the HND central government. SOUTHCOM CA teams, again made up of CMSE, CAEP (AC and RC), and USMC CA teams, worked with the Honduran Military (HNDMIL), local governments, and informal local community leaders. The CA teams helped the HNDMIL to better understand the sources of this lingering mistrust and how dark networks were leveraging it to manipulate certain vulnerable communities. Once again, CIM was the foundation for tailored civic action programs designed to mitigate identified civil vulnerabilities—in this case, the lack of trust between the security services and the people. This enabled the CA teams and HNDMIL to craft CA projects designed to encourage civil society and community leaders to work with security services to build trust, thereby taking away the dark networks' ability to influence the population.

### **Task 2: Build the partner nation's capability for civil engagement.**

*“This takes us full circle back to the relationship between state and society on which legitimacy is based” or “Where they (the state) form a bond of trust with society, the social innovations so crucial for better governance, stronger democratic rights, and faster development can be unleashed.”<sup>23</sup>*



The second key task of CA teams is to build the PN's capability for civil engagement. A common civil vulnerability dark networks exploit is the PN security forces' lack of ability to positively engage the population. Security forces without the training or doctrinal foundation for civil engagement usually treat the population as an obstacle to getting after the enemy. Clever dark networks quickly realized that a security force ignoring or mistreating a civil population is a valuable resource. When security forces are perceived as mistreating the population, dark networks increase their access and ability to influence the people. In these cases, the PN security forces inadvertently provide dark networks their greatest tool.<sup>24</sup> Once security forces understand how a positive relationship with the population creates stability to defeat dark networks, things begin to move quickly.

A prime example of a CA team assisting in the development of the PN's capability for civil engagement is in the Darién region, the least developed area in Panama and adjacent to Colombia and home of the infamous "Darién Gap" in the Pan-American Highway. The Darién has long been a haven for the FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia, or Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia), the communist insurgent group that has fought the Government of Colombia for over 50 years. Under-governed spaces and lawlessness make it a key trafficking route for illicit smuggling and illegal migration as well as special interest aliens.<sup>25</sup> The Darién was a convenient location for FARC fighters to refit and prepare operations. Over the years, the absence of a positive Government of Panama (GoP) presence in the Darién allowed the FARC and other organized criminal elements to influence the population.<sup>26</sup> The GoP was

not well liked, and the FARC were seen by many as heroes. The border security force, SENAFRONT (Servicio Nacional de Fronteras, or National Border Service), focused solely on their job of securing the border and avoided engagement with the people as much as possible. This allowed the FARC to use the population to hide, retool plans, and leverage for resources. SOUTHCOM CA teams and the Military Information Support Teams (MIST) focused on building the SENAFRONT's capability to engage the local population. Together these teams assisted the SENAFRONT in understanding that the population was the source of the FARC's ability to operate and hide and that this power could be degraded not by direct action but by positively engaging with and influencing the population. SENAFRONT adopted a civil engagement strategy and developed a strong partnership with local and national civil agencies. As a result, over the last five years, the presence of the FARC in the Darién decreased by almost 90 percent.<sup>27</sup>

A second example of CA capability building for strategic effects can be seen in the USMC CA team in Belize. MARFORSOUTH has maintained a CA team in Belize since 2014. It has been extremely successful in working with the Belizean Defense Forces (BDF) to increase their understanding of the strategic effect of civil engagement and their ability to positively engage the population. The USMC CA team works with the BDF to design and implement civic action projects that improve relationships with the population. The BDF is a small force responsible for protecting a relatively large area with remote and isolated communities. As the BDF improves its relationship with these communities, it gains understanding of the dark network threats and can better protect the population.

### **Task 3: Build friendly networks that isolate dark networks (Blue, Green, and White).**

*“Interconnectedness and the ability to transmit information instantly can enable small groups with unprecedented influence.”<sup>28</sup>*

The third key task SOUTHCOM CA elements must accomplish is to support the disruption of threat networks. This is done indirectly by increasing friendly (Blue, Green, and White) networks<sup>29</sup> to push out dark networks,<sup>30</sup> which use a combination of persuasion and intimidation to control and manipulate populations for their own ends. Their work is made easy when individuals and organizations are isolated from support, bereft of resources, and left with no legitimate options.

To fight this, CA teams, under a broader US-SOUTHCOM effort, built a friendly network to counter the isolation and vulnerability of certain communities and thrust the threat network out of the civil space.<sup>31</sup> A friendly network provides mutual support that enhances the capability of a community to resist the malign influence of dark networks. Providing more options to vulnerable communities limits options for dark networks.<sup>32</sup> By connecting security forces, local government institutions, NGOs, academic and religious organizations, local businesses, and the broader civil society, communities can develop a strong friendly network that is resistant to dark network intimidation. CA teams facilitate these connections.

One important example of how SOUTHCOM CA facilitates the development of friendly networks to successfully displaced threat networks can be found in HND. CAEP, CMSE, and USMC CA teams as well

as CA planners embedded with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)<sup>33</sup> and the efforts of JTF-Bravo and SPMAGTF have created a broad network aligned to support Honduran communities under threat from dark networks. In the easternmost department<sup>34</sup> of Gracias a Dios, an under-governed area that serves as the entry point for a majority of illicit narcotics flowing into HND,<sup>35</sup> SPMAGTF and JTF-Bravo are working with the HNDMIL to expand the reach of the Honduran government into previously under-governed spaces. SPMAGTF and JTF-Bravo work with the HNDMIL to execute civil action projects (medical from JTF-Bravo<sup>36</sup> and engineering and construction from SPMAGTF<sup>37</sup>) connecting the HNDMIL with local governments, NGOs, religious leaders, and other community organizations.<sup>38</sup>

Farther west along the Atlantic coast in the Colón Department, a key leg in the illicit trafficking route, dark networks assault the legitimacy of the Government of Honduras by exacerbating ethnic strife and land rights issues. CAEP teams work with JTF-Bravo<sup>39</sup> and SPMAGTF<sup>40</sup> in crafting small civic action projects designed to facilitate the HNDMIL relationship with these formally disenfranchised communities.

Along the northern coast in the city of San Pedro Sula, CAEP teams are working closely with MIST, USAID, and Department of State Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) to support the Honduras National Police (HNP) community policing programs. The CAEP and MIST teams conduct medical and engineering civic action projects in communities under threat from gangs, and MIST develops strategic messages to facilitate community understanding of the role of the police in securing and stabilizing the community. A CA planner embedded with USAID

and working closely with INL in the U.S. Country Team facilitates this cooperation and supports long-range planning, ensuring CA in all its forms maintains a consistent strategic impact and integration with the Country Team.

## **Lessons Learned and Recommendations**

The evolving and adaptable nature of dark networks combined with their significant ability to destabilize partner nations, influence vulnerable populations, and challenge U.S. foreign policy objectives require a new approach from U.S. combatant commanders. Dark Networks remain below the level of combat, thus beyond the reach of the U.S.'s most effective weapons and authorities. SOUTHCOM experience with CA offers some lessons and recommendations in terms of DOTMLPF<sup>41</sup> and operational design.

*Indirect Approach.* As dark networks challenge the U.S. in the gray zone/below the level of combat, our political, moral, and legal mores will not allow the U.S. to respond directly; thus, working with US PNs and taking actions that positively affect the OE must be the main effort in operations to disrupt dark networks. In other words, the *indirect approach* must be the main effort.

### *Recommendations.*

A. DoD doctrine discussing the indirect approach should be expanded. The majority of U.S. DoD doctrine is focused on the direct approach and U.S. only operations; this must be expanded to not only CA doctrine but throughout the Joint Force.

B. CA planners must continue to ensure commanders understand the full range of nonlethal and influence capabilities available for all types of operations. CA planners must ensure commanders can leverage all indirect capabilities and units available. The near-elimination of the 85<sup>th</sup> CA Brigade and the decrease in RC CA units seems counter-intuitive to the needs of combatant commanders.<sup>42</sup>

*Advising.* Every example above involves CA elements working with and advising PN military and civilian leaders. In fact, it is difficult to find a successful example of CA activities that does not involve an advisory role. Why is it then that the requirement to be a world-class advisor is completely overlooked in CA doctrine? FM 3-57 Civil Affairs Operations<sup>43</sup> lists CA common skills. Skill as an advisor is not mentioned – inform and influence is close but even that falls well below land navigation. An examination of some of history's greatest advisors such as TE Lawrence, Glubb Pasha,<sup>44</sup> and Edward Lansdale<sup>45</sup> clearly show that a skilled advisor can have a strategic impact.

*Recommendations.* CA doctrine MUST explicitly frame the importance of being a skilled advisor and offer commanders assistance on the training and use of CA as advisors. CA units must include advisory skills as part of their pre-mission training.

*Build Community Resilience.* Dark networks seek vulnerable communities that they can manipulate for their own ends. U.S. and PN resources are limited and cannot be everywhere at all times – in any case, it is essential that communities develop their own resilience against these influences. Resilient communities are well governed, have strong internal bonds, and have

strong bonds with their neighbors, making it part of a larger network of mutually supportive communities. This supporting bond is called “social capital essential for a well-functioning and resilient community.”<sup>46</sup>

*Recommendations:* “The problem is that trust and norms of reciprocity do not emerge spontaneously, but are a byproduct of interaction.”<sup>47</sup> If only there was a USG organization trained and capable of engaging a population and facilitating interaction and cooperation in support of stability. Of course there is, but CA doctrine does not currently consider community resilience. A reevaluation of CA doctrine will help CA commanders develop tailored PMT and help CA staff officers better advise their commanders.

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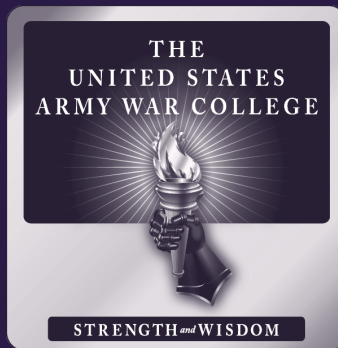
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