

CIVIL AFFAIRS ISSUE PAPERS
VOLUME 8, 2021–2022

Building a Global Civil-Military Network

2021 Civil Affairs Symposium Report

by Christopher Holshek

ISSUE PAPER

Civil Affairs and Great-Power Competition: Civil-Military Networking in the Gray Zone

by Nicholas Kempenich, Jr.

ISSUE PAPER

Back to Basics: Civil Affairs in a Global Civil-Military Network

by Jim Munene & Courtney Mulhern

ISSUE PAPER

Maximum Support, Flexible Footprint: Civilian Applied Research Laboratories to Support the 38G Program

by Hayden Bassett & Kate Harrell

ISSUE PAPER

Individualism versus Collectivism: Civil Affairs and the Clash of National Strategic Cultures

by Marco A. Bongioanni

ISSUE PAPER

Innovation as a Weapon System: Cultivating Global Entrepreneur and Venture Capital Partnerships

by Giancarlo Newsome, Bradford Hughes
& Tyson Voelkel

Building a Global Civil-Military Network

CIVIL AFFAIRS ISSUE PAPERS, VOLUME 8, 2021–2022

THE CIVIL AFFAIRS ASSOCIATION
ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY

Building a Global Civil-Military Network

CIVIL AFFAIRS ISSUE PAPERS, VOLUME 8, 2021–2022

PRESENTED BY

The Civil Affairs Association

AND THE

Association of the United States Army

IN COORDINATION WITH THE

U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School/
Special Operations Center of Excellence,

NATO Civil-Military Cooperation Center of Excellence,

Reserve Organization of America,

Foreign Area Officers Association,

Alliance for Peacebuilding

AND THE

U.S. Global Leadership Coalition

EDITED BY

Christopher Holshek

COPY EDITED BY

Larry Rubini

The contents of this volume represent the opinions of the authors and should not be taken to represent the views of the organizations with which they are affiliated, the Department of the Army, the Department of Defense, the United States government, the Civil Affairs Association or the Association of the United States Army.

1 | **Foreword**
by Colonel Joseph P. Kirlin III, USA, Ret.

5 | **2021 Civil Affairs Symposium Report**
by Colonel Christopher Holshek, USA, Ret.

CIVIL AFFAIRS ISSUE PAPERS

31 | **Civil Affairs and Great-Power Competition: Civil-Military
Networking in the Gray Zone**
by Sergeant First Class Nicholas Kempenich, Jr., USA

39 | **Innovation as a Weapon System: Cultivating Global Entrepreneur
and Venture Capital Partnerships**
by Major Giancarlo Newsome, USA, Colonel Bradford Hughes, USA,
& Lieutenant Colonel Tyson Voelkel, USA

53 | **Maximum Support, Flexible Footprint: Civilian Applied Research
Laboratories to Support the 38G Program**
by Dr. Hayden Bassett & Lieutenant Kate Harrell, USNR

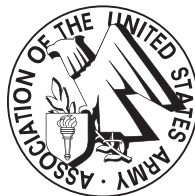
63 | **Individualism versus Collectivism: Civil Affairs and the Clash of
National Strategic Cultures**
by Colonel Marco A. Bongioanni, USA

72 | **Back to Basics: Civil Affairs in a Global Civil-Military Network**
by Major Jim Munene, USA, & Staff Sergeant Courtney Mulhern, USA



The Civil Affairs Association is a 501(c) (19) nonprofit veterans organization that: advocates superior and ready United States civil affairs forces for the full range of operations; informs and educates military institutions and commands as well as interagency and political leaders on civil affairs matters; provides interservice, interorganizational and interallied intellectual capitalization platforms for civil affairs professional and force development; and, most importantly, gives civil affairs professionals from all corners a voice in the future of their enterprise.

Learn more at www.civilaffairsassoc.org.



The Association of the United States Army (AUSA) is a nonprofit educational and professional development association serving America's Army and supporters of a strong national defense. AUSA provides a voice for the Army, supports the Soldier and honors those who have served in order to advance the security of the nation.

Learn more at www.ausa.org.

Foreword

The Civil Affairs Association's annual Symposium, held this past year on 8–10 November 2021, was centered around the theme of *Building a Global Civil-Military Network*. As we saw in 2020, the virtual format of the event, necessitated by the pandemic, was ultimately conducive to greater participation and increased input across the board when compared to our previously held in-person events.

Our expanded, multicomponent, interservice, interallied and interorganizational platform is more critical than ever in an era of gray-zone competition among great powers. The Association's platforms foster intellectual capitalization and intellectual readiness in the Army, the joint force and the nation as they collectively maintain and further develop their foremost capability of "winning without fighting."

Our collaborative process for CA professional and force development includes Symposium workshops representative of the critical constituencies of the CA Corps—the Army and Marine Corps CA proponents; the major Army command that is home to CA as well as psychological operations (PSYOP) and information operations (IO) forces; and the Army and Marine NCOs and junior leaders who are among the joint force's consummate human networkers. The insights and inputs especially of our seasoned young leaders are valuable not just to determining the future of CA but also to an Army, joint force and nation looking to learn from its losses in Iraq and Afghanistan and so to become more ready and effective for great-power competition with such countries as China and Russia.

The *Civil Affairs Issue Papers* is the Association's professional development capstone; it serves to deepen and broaden formal institutional processes for CA force development along the lines of policy, doctrine, organization, training, material, leadership and education, personnel and facilities (DOTMLPF-P).

The Symposium and Roundtable drive an ongoing, annual thematic discussion on the future of CA; together, they are now on their ninth year of advancing a more strategic and comprehensive understanding of CA. They also help to foster a learning organization that goes beyond military command structures and the CA Corps to include allies in counterpart civil-military organizations, such as the NATO Civil-Military Cooperation Center of Excellence (CCoE) and interorganizational partners. In other words: the Association has long been helping the CA Corps to build a global civil-military network.

Our rich discussions during our 2021 event involved nearly 500 participants over the three days. Their observations and findings include consideration of recent operations, such as *Operation Allies Welcome* and *Operation Allies Refuge*, both of which once again demonstrated the enduring value of how the human capital of a robust civil-military network brings those operations together quickly and effectively. Such a network helps to gain and maintain the access and influence that: defines the positional advantage in strategic competition; provides a wide and continuous feedback to enable more effective unified action; and aids superior political-civil-military executive decisionmaking.

Our keynote speaker, Major General Darrell J. Guthrie, Commanding General, 88th Readiness Division and former Commanding General of the U.S. Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command (Airborne), also pointed out how building civil-military networks generates important civil knowledge that must be effectively shared and integrated

widely in complex operations. The Association thanks him for his brilliant presentation in which he related his oversight of *Operation Allies Welcome* to this year's theme.

More than anything else, he and many others noted that the consistent presence of CA and other information-related forces helps senior political and military leaders to gain and maintain situational awareness and understanding. These forces are found at theater, joint and service commands, at interagency offices such as at the U.S. Agency for International Development and the U.S. State Department's Global Engagement Center, as well as among country teams at U.S. embassies.

CA's multilevel civil reconnaissance and civil engagement in forward areas also provide the civil knowledge and regional and cultural competencies needed for long-term success across the entire competition continuum. Opportunities for CA to contribute abound—by, with and through country teams, Security Force Assistance Brigades, National Guard state partners, Foreign Area Officers, allies, commercial enterprises, peacebuilders and humanitarians, etc. Such opportunities also exist with United Nations (UN) field missions, where CA professionals can serve as civil-military staff members and UN military observers.

As this year's *Issue Papers* have also observed, at institutional as well as operational levels, "persistent engagement" among CA and its many interagency, interorganizational, multinational and private sector partners is critical to building a readily leverageable global civil-military network. This is where the Civil Affairs Association leads the way.

The Association's role in convening the extended CA Corps—through the Symposium and Roundtable, *Civil Affairs Issue Papers*, *Eunomia Journal* and *One CA Podcasts*—has become particularly valuable over these past few years of rapid change in our shared enterprise. While these platforms help mainstream CA into the larger discussions of the Army, the Marine Corps, the joint force and national security issues, they also help improve CA professional analytical and writing skills, effectively moving forward an enterprise of civil-military enterprises—of great benefit to the Army and Marine Corps as well as the joint force, the nation and our allies.

Civil Affairs Association events and platforms provide an open, collegial space for major civil-military commands and centers of excellence to gather for institutional flank coordination in policy, doctrinal, force and professional development, not to mention the sharing of best practices. These commands are: the CA Proponent at the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center & School (USAJFKSWCS), the U.S. Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command (Airborne), or USACAPOC(A), the CCoE and even the UN Office of Military Affairs.

Another example of the opportunities that the Association provides is their sponsoring of online CA NCO professional development sessions to help the CA Corps to socialize the complex sets of knowledge and information from the latest Field Manual 3-57 *Civil Affairs Operations* doctrine among the largest possible number of active and reserve NCOs. This is a need that the Association was able to identify through the relevant Symposium workshop.

Through its growing array of initiatives, the Association contributes to the building of a global civil-military network through its organizational partners, in addition to the Association of the United States Army—whose partnership in the production of this eighth volume of the *Civil Affairs Issue Papers* is most appreciated. The Association also thanks the CCoE, the Reserve Officer Association, the Foreign Area Officers Association, the Military Officers Association of America, the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition and the Alliance for

Peacebuilding for their collaboration. This coming year, we are looking to formalize relationships with other strategic influencers on shared matters of foreign and defense policy. Stay tuned for the announcements.

To help the CA Corps educate Army, Marine and joint commanders, as well as inter-agency and interorganizational leadership and policymakers on its increasing values-added, the Association is reorganizing its efforts to engage these key leaders. These include members of Congress, institutional leaders and commercial partners—who comprise the industrial base for CA that the Association is helping to build—and the public and media at large.

Thanks go foremost to the Association of the United States Army in helping us to make this publication possible. Their partnership has been invaluable. Special thanks go to Mrs. Nzinga A. Curry, AUSA's Director of Education & Programs, and to Ellen Toner and her editorial team for their diligence and cooperation.

Additional thanks go to our Issue Papers Committee: Chairman, Brigadier General Bruce B. Bingham, USA, Ret.; Colonel Christopher Holshek, USA, Ret., (who edits each volume); Colonel Caroline Pogge, USA; Major General Mike Kuehr, USA, Ret.; Colonel Leonard J. DeFrancisci, USMC, Ret.; and Colonel Larry Rubini, USA, Ret.—as well as the paper authors themselves.

Our website continues to improve, while our social media outlets have expanded beyond Facebook and Twitter to LinkedIn, Spotify and Sticher. More changes are to come this year. Thanks go to Association Vice President Colonel Arnel David, USA, and his team for their hard work.

We are grateful to Third Order Effects, Civil Solutions International, Valka Mir Human Security, the Patriot Fund and our newest sponsor, Conducttr, for their sponsorship. We look forward to having them and more sponsors join us in the future.

The Association is also grateful to USAJFKSWCS, the Army Peacekeeping & Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI), the State and Defense Departments, the U.S. Agency for International Development, various functional and regional commands and to the CCoE, with whom we are advancing our common civil-military enterprise on both sides of the Atlantic.

Special thanks go to Association Vice Presidents Colonel Christopher Holshek, USA, Ret., Colonel Arnel David, USA, Major General Daniel Ammerman, USA, Ret., and Brigadier General Christopher Stockel, USA, Ret., for putting together a great Symposium program—available online on the *Eunomia Journal* YouTube channel.

Finally, our thanks go out to the many members and supporters of the Association who contribute quietly to our worldwide civil-military enterprise—to educate, advocate and motivate.

We look forward to seeing you at the online Civil Affairs Roundtable on 5 April. To learn more and to join our Association, visit www.civilaffairsassoc.org.

“Secure the Victory!”

Joseph P. Kirlin III
Colonel, USA, Ret., Civil Affairs
President, The Civil Affairs Association

2021 Civil Affairs Symposium Report

by Colonel Christopher Holshek, USA, Ret.

The Civil Affairs Association hosted its annual web-based Symposium, sponsored by Third-Order Effects, Valka-Mir Security and Conducttr, on 8–10 November 2021. Building on last year’s discussion and the realization that Civil Affairs (CA) can help the Army to better understand strategic competition, this year’s theme was “Building a Global Civil-Military Network.” Recent events suggest critical lessons for building a global civil-military network to strengthen alliances and attract new partners. A global civil-military network also helps regional commands, interagency bureaus and embassies deal with challenges like Chinese and illicit network penetration in Latin America and Africa, hybrid warfare on the European periphery, anti-access/area denial in the Indo-Pacific region and climate-driven disruptions and humanitarian disasters.

The creation of a more formal and deliberate global network of civil-military enterprises is long overdue, now more obvious in an era of great-power (or strategic) competition in which access and influence define positional advantage. In today’s geopolitical environment, global competition resonates most at the levels of key leader and population engagement. Whether for major combat operations, irregular, hybrid or other forms of gray-zone warfare, or continuous competition with state and non-state actors, advantage falls to the force that acculturates a superior learning network—institutionally, not just operationally.

The greatest value-added of CA, strategically as well as operationally, has always been in its ability to develop and leverage civil networks, resulting from persistent civil reconnaissance (CR) and civil engagement (CE) and captured in civil knowledge. CA does this by, with and through a vast array of military and civilian partners. This capacity, however, is now more vital to “winning without fighting by leveraging all elements of national power,” as Army Chief of Staff General James McConville phrased it in his first paper on competition.¹

As the premier Army and joint capability to win without fighting, these “warrior-diplomats” comprise a diverse and people-centric force for influence, collaboration and competition in multi-domain and joint all-domain operations (MDO and JADO) and for information and irregular warfare. As this unique force maneuvers in human geography, it builds personal and professional relationships, gaining positional advantages from access and influence as well as regional and cultural understanding vital to strategic and operational design for interagency-led competition in-theater. A lead economy-of-force capability for narrative, direct and indirect competition, CA enriches civil-military integration.

Civil networks and knowledge from nonstop virtual and forward-deployed engagements also mitigate the inherent U.S. handicap as the “visiting team.” This is especially true when CA works by, with and through country teams, Security Force Assistance Brigades (SFABs), National Guard State Partnership Program partners, Foreign Area Officers, NATO and United Nations (UN) Civil-Military Coordination, commercial enterprises, peacebuilders and humanitarians, etc.

What should that network look like? What should comprise its collaborative frameworks and tools, its civil knowledge, convening and information-sharing architectures—institutionally and operationally? What other changes in doctrine, organization, training,

materiel, leadership and education, personnel, facilities and policy (DOTMLPF-P) should take place, within and beyond current capacities to facilitate this expanded learning organization? How should they be implemented and prioritized? These were the questions framing the discussion at the 2021 Symposium and informing the research and writing of this volume of the *Civil Affairs Issue Papers*.

Major Findings

The Symposium provided neither comprehensive nor conclusive answers to these questions. From the speakers, workshops and *Civil Affairs Issue Papers*, the Association and friends will enable the CA Corps and its partners to offer ways ahead to further refine viewpoints and potential solutions for these lasting questions at the Roundtable in April. Among the findings:

- Especially for strategic competition, having a robust civil-military network as a result of robust and consistent CE, at home as well as abroad, provides a wide and continuous feedback loop to enable more effective unified action and political-military decisionmaking.
- The resulting civil knowledge from such networks must be integrated with other knowledge platforms to promote unified action. Knowledge itself being power, the ability to share and integrate it rapidly is vital to success in complex operations and strategic competition, regardless of where, when and why.
- Building broad-based civil networks produces and perpetuates regional and cultural competencies—which, in turn, enhance and enable information operations (IO)—and is critical to long-term mission success.
- While the U.S. Army just updated Field Manual (FM) 3-57, *Civil Affairs Operations* (CAO), both NATO and the UN are about to field updates of their own civil-military policies and doctrines. For all three organizations, while these updates may have closed some cognitive gaps in respective emerging civil-military operations, many questions remain on how to institutionalize the necessary, non-doctrinal “OTMLPF” changes to unleash the considerable potential of civil-military forces. Platforms like the Symposium and Roundtable can help the major civil-military centers of excellence (CoEs) to conduct force and concept development flank coordination while enhancing a worldwide learning organization.
- CA NCOs will be the driving force in the transition to updated CAO concepts and new CA military occupational specialties (MOSs).
- Regional civil-military networking calls for CA professionals to: continuously map and visualize the network as it grows to better understand and visualize its reach, power and gaps; network internally and organize for a network approach; and build layered networks. It also requires: a CE approach that is centered on common aspirations (opportunities) as much as it is on common problems (threats); and continuous forward presence and operationalizing CA teams in the rear to support forward teams. Fostering strategic empathy, understanding how CA supports security cooperation and promoting presence and engagement with a genuine view to learning are also important.
- Especially in security cooperation missions in strategic competition, CE activities also serve as a form of CR, enabling CA to better understand cultural context and to

identify deep-seated social grievances and aspirations at different levels of society, as well as threats to and opportunities for interagency and interorganizational stabilization.

- CA operators must be knowledgeable of and networked with interagency as well as with other military information- and influence-related capabilities in order to be strategically shaped to gain and maintain positional advantage in the information environment. This requires persistent engagement with them institutionally, not just operationally.
- CA activities must actively support U.S. interagency strategic messages for targeted civil societies, rather than assuming that merely their broadcast is sufficient to lay the groundwork for the tactical or operational success of specific stabilization projects or key-leader engagements.
- In order to have a synergistic impact with interorganizational partners, CA must be nearly as knowledgeable of them as they are of interagency partners—and must be knowledgeable of applicable DoD authorities and funding mechanisms such as Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster and Civic Aid (ODACHA) for multiple reasons: CA must be able to speak authoritatively as the primary advisor to military commands about them, and must have practical and earned knowledge of how to best appropriately and discreetly integrate military capabilities with their capacities operationally.
- Reserve CA forces are still not readily available to military commands for other than major combat or post-conflict operations. They are still limited by archaic and arcane mobilization authorities and by funding mechanisms that prevent them from leveraging the unique capacities of CA and other information-related capabilities that are largely held in the RC. While detrimental to conventional wartime and post-conflict operations, the Army’s inability to readily and steadily access such forces could prove incapacitating in strategic competition. This inability also encumbers the strategic depth of shrinking active component CA forces under greater demand for security cooperation and persistent engagement missions.
- The growing military involvement of Russia and China in UN field missions in Africa gives them greater regional access and influence—and enables them to change UN peace operations policies in ways that counter U.S. and Western interests and international norms, as a recent National Defense University paper observed.² To counter this growing concern, the United States could increase military staff involvement in UN field missions, on the military staff and as military observers. As warrior-diplomats, CA would be an ideal force for these strategic sensors and enablers.
- One of the best ways the expanded CA Corps can help build a global civil-military network for strategic competition is through the commercial connections that a CA industrial base in applied social sciences and related technologies can engender. While this includes leveraging technologies in artificial intelligence (AI), human domain and social media analyses and simulations, it also involves entrepreneurial and venture capitalism’s crowdfunding and blockchain development platforms, as discussed in the *Issue Paper* on “Innovation as a Weapon System: Cultivating Global Entrepreneur and Venture Capital Partnerships.”

Finally, while this year’s discussion has largely been about improving or expanding CA’s capacities and capabilities, what also came through loud and clear is the need for a

consistent presence of CA forces at theater, joint and service commands, as well as U.S. embassies, for situational awareness and understanding, planning, security cooperation and other “persistent forward engagement” missions in order to shape and build the decisive positional advantages of a robust global civil-military network.

As 2021 Civil Affairs Roundtable keynote speaker Lieutenant General Eric J. Wesley, USA, Ret., stated, “You can’t compete if you’re not there.”³ Or, as Colonel William Smith, USA, warned at the Symposium: “If we don’t get into the fight during competition, by the time we get to open conflict, the war is already lost.” Beyond reviving the 2016–2017 discussion of “leveraging civil affairs,” the issue of how to create a demand signal for CA in strategic competition may merit greater attention.

Keynote Speaker

This year’s keynote speaker was Major General Darrell J. Guthrie, Commanding General, 88th Readiness Division, former Commanding General of the U.S. Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command (Airborne), or USACAPOC(A). His talk was “Observations of a Former Civil Affairs Commanding General on *Operation Allies Welcome*,” facilitated by Association Vice President and former USACAPOC(A) Commanding General Major General Daniel R. Ammerman, USA, Ret.

As senior mission commander for the operation, MG Guthrie was able to draw on many of the 88th’s 55,000 Soldiers, based in 250 facilities in 19 states from Ohio to the Pacific Northwest, to receive and process over 77,000 emigree arrivals from Afghanistan between 17 August and 25 October. The majority of these resettling evacuees worked directly with U.S. military, diplomatic or development efforts—including their family members. At one of eight DoD installations handling this influx, about 1,500 Soldiers of Task Force McCoy worked with representatives of 200 federal interagency and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), as well as state and local governments, to resettle almost 13,000 of these evacuees. From Guthrie’s point of view, the civil-military, federal, state and local governmental and community coordination has been “absolutely amazing.”

In response to Association President Kirlin’s mention of the last such operation in which CA was involved—assisting Cubans in the “Freedom Flotilla” in May 1980—MG Guthrie noted some similarities. Among these were the scale and rapidity of the surge of evacuees and the complex challenge of interagency, intergovernmental and interorganizational coordination, let alone military command and control. The current lines of responsibility, however, are clearer now than they were in 1980, thanks to the Defense Support to Civil Authority (DSCA) authority construct and its smooth transitions to the State Department, as the initial lead federal agency, on to the Department of Homeland Security. There are clearer delineations of legal jurisdictions. Additionally, today’s information-rich environment, including social media, has enabled faster and more consistent dissemination of information to the guests. This resettlement mission has continued through the winter and on into the spring, although the numbers are dwindling.

Concurring with this year’s theme, MG Guthrie emphasized how the operation he has overseen demonstrates the criticality of building networks in the complex MDO era. One of the great comparative advantages of reserve forces in general, and reserve CA forces in particular, is their natural ability to build civil networks. It is particularly helpful to consider this in light of the following definition from the previously-mentioned updated FM 3-57:

A civil network is a collection of formal and informal groups, associations, military engagements, and organizations within an operational environment that interact with each other with varying degrees of frequency, trust, and collaboration.⁴

In *Operation Allies Welcome*, MG Guthrie shared, “We learned to trust and collaborate on the fly. It would have been so much easier if some of these networks were already established.” As an aside, he also noted that the Civil Affairs Association and events such as the Symposium and Roundtable contribute to greater frequency, trust and collaboration within the interagency, international organizations and NGO community. They also enable better understanding of the various populations in question for any given circumstance, including their formal and informal structure. In today’s operational environment, especially for strategic competition, having a robust civil-military network as a result of CE, at home as well as abroad, provides a wide and continuous feedback loop to enable more effective unified action and political-military decisionmaking.

In his second major insight, MG Guthrie cited FM 3-57 again to explain how the resulting civil knowledge that such networks generate must be “integrated with other knowledge about the operational environment to create shared understanding among commanders, unified action partners, international organizations and civilian partners.”⁵ “Knowledge is power,” he went on, “and the ability to share and integrate it rapidly is critical to success in complex operations. It is also essential to creating shared understanding across the interagency and NGO representatives. This is true whether you are in Syria or in Wisconsin.”

His third insight noted that civil networks produce and perpetuate regional and cultural competencies, but came with a caveat: “We continue to struggle in this space when it comes to tribal, ethnic and cultural norms.” He went on to share personal recommendations on how to move the CA enterprise forward:

- First, DoD and DA civilian executive as well as military command leadership must better recognize the capabilities, skills and talents that reside in USACAPOC and the CA community writ large. The demand is undoubtedly there for CA forces in DSCA mission sets—Army National Guard units maintain CA personnel in their ranks and, in this operational case, all eight DoD safe havens have requested CA support. Yet, there were only two CA-qualified officers in the operations (one of which was MG Guthrie). There remains a sense of confusion on whether CA forces are restricted to operating only overseas. CA forces, both active and reserve, need more full-spectrum legal authorities and budget mechanisms that could easily make them far more accessible to joint and Army commands. More CA personnel were needed for this operation, but reserve CA forces are still not readily available to military commands for anything other than major combat or post-conflict operations. While merely detrimental to operations such as these, such a limiting circumstance could prove incapacitating in a steady state of strategic competition.
- His second recommendation is with respect to how CA’s unique abilities for civil networking, CE, civil analysis and civil knowledge integration make it a *de facto* force of choice in psychological as well as IO. Again, drawing from FM 3-57, MG Guthrie noted how, when deployed, “CA forces enhance and enable information operations (IO) by identifying civil aspects of the information environment, assessing and evaluating civil indicators of IO effectiveness within the AO, and providing actionable options to the supported commander’s IO plan regarding themes and messages.

CA forces complete these actions and provide support to IO through the conduct of CAO.”⁶ As an information-related capability, CA “is profoundly important because money and thought leadership, like today, is flowing to those providing these capabilities.” Whether in *Operation Allies Welcome*, competition, or conflict, operations are conducted in a rich information environment. Therefore, being able to enhance and enable IO is critical to mission success and the long-term success of CA.

Workshop I – Civil Affairs Proponent Updates: CA in Joint, Army, Marine Corps & NATO Initiatives

The Symposium workshops kicked off with a panel of institutional representatives from the “proponents/schoolhouses” to provide updates on issues and initiatives that their organizations have been working on since the CA Roundtable held in April 2021. As in previous sessions, Colonel Dennis J. Cahill, USA, Ret., Deputy Civil Affairs Capability Manager at the U.S. Army Special Operations Command Force Modernization Center (UFMC), and a current Civil Affairs Association Director, returned to moderate. The panel members included, in order of presentation, Lieutenant Colonel (promotable) Dave Henning of the Joint Civil Affairs Proponent at U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM); Colonel Kurt Sisk, Civil Affairs Capability Manager at the UFMC; Colonel Jay Liddick, Director of the U.S. Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI); Mr. Aaron Weiss, USMC CA Strategic Planner at the Office of the Deputy Commandant for Information (DCI), who is also a senior CA NCO and a Civil Affairs Association Director; and Lieutenant Colonel Stefan Muehlich, Branch Chief of the Concepts, Interoperability and Capabilities Branch at the NATO Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) Centre of Excellence (CCoE).

LTC(P) Henning kicked off the briefing portion by providing a USSOCOM J39 CA Update. He first presented an overview of the current J39 CA Branch structure, which consists of four officers and one civilian contractor. He then provided an overview of two main points:

- The J39 is in the process of updating the USSOCOM Directive that governs the MFP-11-funded civil-military engagement (CME) program of record. Connected to this update is a related effort to develop a better system of tracking and reporting CME progress and achievements in each theater so that decisionmakers better understand the value proposition of special operations CA Soldiers in global networks during competition.
- The Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20) Annual Assessment of USSOCOM’s status as the Joint Proponent for CA was completed and submitted in written form in March of 2021. A formal presentation of results to the office of the Assistant Deputy Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict (ASD (SO/LIC)) has been delayed for several reasons, but course of action development for future execution of joint CA proponentcy is expected to resume with a 16 November 2021 briefing to the USSOCOM Chief of Staff. The J39 will conduct the FY21 Annual Assessment by the end of second quarter FY22 and will likely present the results of both the FY20 and FY21 assessments to the ASD (SO/LIC) at that time. In the meantime, the joint doctrine team projects initial coordination and a call for a writing team to update Joint Publication 3-57 sometime in the second or third quarter of FY22.

COL Sisk followed with a U.S. Army Civil Affairs Proponent Update, focusing on the following:

- A restated value proposition to augment existing strategic communications messages: “Civil affairs forces provide commanders a capability to *understand* and *address* the political, economic and social challenges of the operational environment that affects all military operations.”
- An overview of the current Civil Affairs Capability Manager Division structure, which consists of six officers, one NCO, five Department of the Army civilians and two individuals borrowed from outside organizations to focus on key elements of CA modernization.
- A discussion of five priority efforts and the multiple supporting efforts that he and his team are working on to move the Army’s CA force into the future. Recent developments include the publication of a new version of FM 3-57 on 29 July 2021; the redesignation of active CA officers from 38A to 38S and the active NCOs from 38B to 38R, 38T, 38W and 38Z. Chief among the ongoing efforts is the development of a CA Science and Technology Learning Ecosystem (CASTLE), which incorporates technical elements of the CA Solution-Army (CAS-A) effort and a multi-disciplinary science approach to understanding and analyzing the human aspects of military operations that will be built into a unique framework for training and educating future CA Soldiers and units.

COL Jay Liddick then updated for the Joint Proponent for Stabilization and Peace Operations:

- While PKSOI remains at Carlisle Barracks, PA, and works with the U.S. Army War College, it now reports to the commander of the Combined Arms Center at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.
- With about 20 assigned personnel, PKSOI concentrates on policy and strategy; concepts and doctrine; training and exercises; and leader development and education. In order to move both stabilization and peace operations forward, PKSOI works closely with the CA Capability Manager and the CA Branch Proponent on key elements of those responsibilities.
- Within four lines of effort designed to improve DoD, interagency and other partner peace and stability capabilities, PKSOI key efforts include: updating Joint Publication 3-07, *Stabilization Activities*; institutionalizing the Joint Interagency Stabilization Course with two courses per year for 30 students each in March and October; implementing the Global Fragility Act in coordination with DoD, the Department of State (DoS) and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID); and working with the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Stabilization and Humanitarian Affairs (DASD (SHA)) to execute the Biennial Stabilization Assessment for 2022.

Mr. Aaron Weiss provided a USMC CA proponent update, covering four main points:

- A recent virtual CA working group for USMC CA units and professionals developed or refined multiple topics across DOTMLPF-P to focus the USMC proponent in its work to improve CA group (CAG) operations and force professionalization.
- The proponent has nearly completed a new policy for CA and civil-military operations, covering topics such as governance of the CA community within the USMC structure and the role of CA within IO.

- Within the area of force professionalization, the proponent is recoding CA positions into a 17XX code set that combines psychological operations and CA into a single career track for Influence Officers and Influence Marines and in the active component. There will be no immediate change to management of RC CA Marines until after the active component changes are assessed. At the same time, security clearance requirements for CA planners are being upgraded to enable better integration with maneuver planning. These changes have necessitated a reassessment of training requirements and an increase in the number of MOS courses for FY22.
- Work is being done to finalize the Marine Civil Information Management System (MARCIMS) as a program of record. It is important to continue to improve this system and to be able to share civil information with partners, the CA community and maneuver units, as well as to integrate analysis with the intelligence community.

LTC Muehlich concluded the briefing portion of the workshop by providing a view of current NATO CIMIC from the perspective of a Branch Chief at the CIMIC CCoE. His main points touched on policy, a comprehensive approach and potential opportunities and risks.

- NATO's revised policy on CIMIC and CMI (civil-military interaction), currently in staffing, reflects several trends in NATO CIMIC, including an increased focus on three areas: non-lethal methods for effects through CMI; analysis and assessment of the civil environment; and widening the scope of operations to include the broader continuum of competition.
- The ability of NATO CIMIC forces to talk to and plan with civilian agencies before crises occur is often challenged by national sovereignty issues and political fears that NATO is interfering with national priorities. To remedy this, the concept of a comprehensive approach is finally being addressed at high levels; it will ultimately be defined in NATO policy and doctrine.
- The CCoE continues to work on the comparison of changing U.S. CA and NATO CIMIC doctrine (announced at the CA Roundtable in April 2021) and hopes to execute the planned courses for EURO-NATO CIMIC familiarization for U.S. CA units in the first quarter of calendar year 2022. One challenge already identified is the number of terms used by both forces that have different meanings, requiring better synchronization in the writing and publication of foundational documents.

The question-and-answer period provided an opportunity for proponent representatives to respond to questions and concerns of the community of interest and covered a broad range of topics, including: the importance of 38G functional specialists and why 38B NCOs are currently restricted from pursuing 38G; the shortfall in the enlisted ranks of USAR CA units and the restructuring of the Army CA force; ownership of CA data using systems such as Palantir and a question regarding the ultimate system for capturing, analyzing and storing CA data; information advantage as it relates to CA operations; USMC CA force structure changes in terms of active and reserve components, enlisted MOSs and regional focus; and the continuation of ASCOPE-PMESII (areas, structures, capabilities, organizations, people and events – political, military, economic, social, information and infrastructure) as a tool for binning data versus analysis and building the assessment framework for CA.

Workshop II – USACAPOC(A) Command Strategic Initiatives in Civil-Military Networking

One of the more insightful discussions on the implications of the new CA doctrine was led by Colonel Marshall Straus Scantlin, USACAPOC(A) Director of Strategic Initiatives. He was joined in a review of “Command Strategic Initiatives in Civil-Military Networking” by three current CA brigade commanders: Colonel Keith K. Kelly, who commands the 364th Civil Affairs Brigade (CA Bde); Colonel Reginald J. Kornegay, commander 360th CA Bde; and Colonel William J. Smith from the 308th CA Bde.

The panel started with an introduction by COL Scantlin in which he asked the question, what do we [USACAPOC(A)] look like and what do we do in the future as our doctrine and environment changes? It focused on two new elements in the 28 July 2021 update of CA doctrine FM 3-57, *Civil Affairs Operations*, which introduces a different way of understanding and implementing CA doctrine. Those two groundbreaking elements are the Civil Affairs Task Force (CATF) and the Civil Network Development and Engagement (CDNE). The panel centered its discussion around two questions: “What is a CATF and how does it operate during competition, conflict or large-scale combat?” and “How do we plan and implement during competition, conflict or large-scale combat?” The panel members described their approaches to these two elements of FM 3-57 and then responded to audience inquiries.

FM 3-57 describes a CATF as a scalable unit in charge of the stabilization elements, organized around the nucleus of CA and support elements, that provides important links among interagency, interorganizational and non-government organizations. The provision can include public affairs, maneuver elements, engineers, medical units, military police, logistics and transportation elements or other units as necessary for stabilization operations. FM 3-57 describes CDNE as the activity that engages, evaluates, develops and integrates civil network capabilities and resources into operations, providing commanders with a more complete understanding of the operational environment. CDNE enables freedom of movement and maneuver, management of limited resources, preservation of combat power and options to find, disrupt and defeat threats in the civil component.

COL Keith Kelly focused on the INDOPACOM area of responsibility and stated that the USACAPOC(A) owns the bulk of the Army’s (and thus the joint force’s) influence capabilities (i.e., 90 percent of CA and PSYOP and 75 percent of IO), including almost all of the strategic and operational level CA. CDNE helps frame CR, civil-military engagement, civil-knowledge integration and other aspects of CAO activities with respect to the human domain. In this sense, he said, “CA Soldiers shape the operational environment” throughout the competition continuum, including in crisis and conflict. He identified two issues with the CDNE concept. One is whether CDNE is a staff or team function, as continued engagement is needed to maintain and build the network. The other is how CA should share the products and information derived from CDNE. In addressing the CATF, he stated that the requirement has to be added to theater operational plans with planning assistance from USACAPOC(A)’s CA commands (CACOMs).

COL Reginald Kornegay emphasized the need to adjust our thinking about CA within the context of the new doctrine. The idea that civil networks must endure during all phases of operations and civil network development to support operations is inherently different from the paradigm of American strategic culture. Especially in great-power competition,

he concluded, “We’re going to have to get out in the field much more in pre-crisis in order to shape the competition environment.” This is because of the greater relevance of strategic and situational *understanding*, which is more than just *awareness*. CATFs are not always focused on support to conventional maneuver; in fact, they can be the focus of operations and can be the lead element for the fulfillment of theater campaign and national strategic objectives. CATF personnel must not only be far better educated than before, but must also train in combat training centers (CTCs) more frequently. Figuring out the CATF’s role in combined, joint and interagency settings will allow us to win without fighting. He stressed, “We cannot be an afterthought,” at any point in the competition continuum.

Further noting the criticality of the constant forward presence of CA forces in theater strategic and operational commands, COL William Smith observed, “If we don’t get into the fight during competition, by the time we get to open conflict, the war is already lost.” He noted how the CATF concept worked very well in the latter stages of U.S. operations in Afghanistan and in CA’s work in Kuwait on refugee issues, adding how access, influence and information advantages have also been a key factor in that regard. Two issues these operations raised are: the lack of a task force in Qatar to work information advantage and IO; and, whether the echelon for basing a CATF should be the CACOM.

Among the questions the panel addressed in the following interactive discussion were:

1. Can we use CA brigades and CACOMs at *Warfighter* exercises? The consensus is yes, we need to use them at higher echelon exercises—where Army and joint force leaders stand to learn to understand and leverage CA in general and CATFs and CDNE in particular.
2. What will CA force structure changes look like with the new doctrine? USACPOC(A), in coordination with the Civil Affairs Proponent, is working some of these issues and expects to forward a recommendation in June 2022. (Note: This may be impacted by the deactivation of the 83rd CA Battalion—the last active component conventional CA formation—along with possible reductions in the 95th CA Bde structure.)
3. Should the information-related capabilities consolidate in one organization? Although no consensus emerged, USACAPOC(A) provides that structure (albeit, not as an operational, force development, or training and doctrine command for Army information-related capabilities).
4. How do we prepare senior NCOs and field grade officers for thinking at Combatant Command level? We should consider the various opportunities that exist to achieve a better development model, e.g., training with industry and college partnerships (as well as self-development platforms ideal for RC CA professionals, such as those listed in the Association website’s “Learning Resources” page).
5. What potential institutional and force development hurdles are we facing, and how do we adapt through operational iterations to prepare for the future? Potential solutions include new ideas and different ways of doing things that are tested; failures will identify areas to improve; and vector-based analysis tools to understand the environment. USACAPOC(A), the panel concluded, has to provide feedback to the Civil Affairs Proponent to further develop and refine doctrine.
6. How would disruption of civil networks, caused by conflict, impact CATF operations and engagements? The current Army model is not sustainable, the panel contended.

Sporadic RC CA deployments restart relationships and network development at the beginning of every deployment, not sharing knowledge gained from rotation to rotation. As COL Smith noted, CA cannot help the Army to help the nation to win without fighting if it is not maintaining a constant presence at supported joint and Army commands, nor maintaining a persistent presence in forward areas in order to conduct CDNE. Human networks evolve rapidly, and continuous engagement is required to understand civil and cultural considerations, shape narratives, limit disruptions, evaluate networks, identify opportunities and respond to changes.

7. What does the USMC version of information advantage look like? USMC transformation includes a cadre to deploy forward and to develop and maintain long-term engagement. Marine Littoral Regiments (MLRs) rotate in and out of theaters to maintain a persistent presence forward but with the reduced footprint of a Marine Air Ground Task Force. MLRs include littoral combat teams, logistics, air, PSYOP, CA and network analysis and engagement.

Workshop III – Non-Commissioned Officer Forum: The Role of the CA NCO in Building Networks

The first day ended with the NCO forum on the role of the CA NCO in building networks—a topic also covered in this year’s winning *Issue Paper*. Facilitated by CA Corps Honorary Sergeant Major and Association Vice-President retired Command Sergeant Major Timothy Kohring, who also serves as a Regional Plans Specialist at the U.S. Army Special Operations Command, the discussants included: Sergeant Major Analisa Ortega, Operations Sergeant Major, 3rd Battalion, 1st Special Warfare Training Group; Sergeant Major Frank Mathias, G37 Sergeant Major, USACAPOC(A); Master Sergeant Nicholas Weisenberger, Operations NCOIC, 98th Civil Affairs Battalion (SO) (A); and Staff Sergeant Lucas Vaughan, Civil Affairs NCO, 96th Civil Affairs Battalion (SO) (A). A word of thanks goes out to 1SG Sean Acosta from the Association for initiating this forum.

The forum centered its discussion around a major implication of the new FM 3-57 in Civil Network Development and Engagement (CDNE) as a new core competency of CA warrior-diplomats and as part of CAO. Future NCOs will eventually learn the new doctrine training within the CA course curriculum, considering that a new officer branch (38S) and a new enlisted MOS (38R) will be created by 2023. For a time, however, the CA operational force will be challenged with having two overlapping CA MOSs within their teams—the original 38B CA NCO (whose MOS converts to 38R as all positions within the tables of organizations and equipment recode to 38R); and the 38R Civil Reconnaissance NCO.

The challenge of managing this transition will fall largely to CA NCOs. School training has yet to be developed to teach the (not yet mature) CDNE concept as envisaged in the doctrine to the operational CA force. In the interim, current CA NCO leadership needs to work within the Army structure while leveraging their well-established leadership, mentoring and adaptive skills to integrate the CDNE concept within the CA force at tactical unit and team levels—all while maintaining current operations tempo in CA team rotations to supported commands in-theater.

While the parallel CDNE and MOS integration processes are primarily happening among active CA, the reserve CA force must also contend with it as a longer and more difficult process. As this transition takes place, networking between active and reserve

CA NCOs must take place simultaneously with building institutional and operational civil-military networks outside the CA Corps. For one, this will enable unit transition processes (as an extension of training). Secondly, it will maintain unit and CA Corps readiness during competition operations. Active/reserve CA unit senior NCO collaboration will drive much of the CDNE and MOS transition process. Senior NCO knowledge and understanding of the new doctrine and human domain will go far in getting units and teams up to speed quickly and effectively.

One area of concern was shown by how the panel members themselves understood the new MOSs only as far as the Military Occupation Change Status (MOCS) as approved, but without clear and detailed descriptions of the new officer/NCO MOSs. At the time of the Symposium, the Proponent was working hard on the 38R MOS but was not available to brief. The panel agreed that the Proponent needs to brief both CDNE, the new MOSs and the transition process at the CA Roundtable next spring.

This will help reach some key CA NCO leaders. Following a discussion with CSM Tim Strong, USA, Ret., CA Proponent Leadership Development Chief, the panel identified a parallel need for a series of online NCO professional development sessions to socialize these complex sets of changes among the largest possible number of active and reserve NCOs. The CA Association has offered to sponsor these online sessions.

Given all these challenges, CA NCO leadership must clearly march the CA Corps forward into the future as outlined in the CA Proponent's 2020 Capabilities Based Assessment (CBA). The mission as described in the CBA outcome is changing for CA. The doctrinal changes in the newest FM 3-57 are more substantial than the incremental ones over the last decade or so. Fortunately, CA NCOs are well educated, motivated and cognizant of the importance of their mission. With an intrinsic understanding and knowledge of their enterprise, they are a driving force within the CA Corps and its transition. Advising bottom-up as well as mentoring top-down, they will manage the changes to come through the Force Modernization process.

Workshop IV – Lessons in Building Regional Networks: Recent, Current and Emerging Operations

The second day opened up with Workshop IV, on “Lessons in Building Regional Networks from Recent, Current and Emerging Operations,” from CA practitioners recently or currently deployed in theater locations. Facilitated by Major Assad A. Raza, Division of Civil-Military Studies (DCMS), Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC), the panel included: Major Nick Dubaz, Civil-Military Plans Officer, C9 Directorate, U.S. Forces Korea; Captain Benjamin Ordiway, a graduate student formerly assigned to the 92nd Civil Affairs Battalion (SO) (A); Captain Benjamin Gump, Chief, Civil Information Management Cell, OEF-HoA; and Sergeant Major Chris Melendez, Civil-Military Operations Planner, U.S. Army Pacific.

MAJ Dubaz noted how contemporary conflict and competition requires building regional civil-military networks that cross borders to accomplish operational and strategic objectives. While CA teams are proficient at developing local networks, there continue to be issues of tying them with tactical level networks and at the operational level to achieve sustainable strategic effects. The Syrian Civil War provides a case study of both conflict and competition for influence in a complex environment, with various insurgent groups supported by foreign powers fighting alongside or against each other, while the resultant

humanitarian crisis has created a massive influx of refugees into Europe. Despite poor cooperation among countries like Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey, CA teams were effective in border area civil network development to support coalition military objectives. There are three key lessons that CA could apply to any regional network-building approach at operational and tactical levels:

- **Continuously map and visualize the network as it grows to better understand and visualize its reach, power and gaps.** The Naval Postgraduate School's CORE Lab provides courses on social network analysis methods, theories and analytical tools used for more information. The techniques taught at the CORE Lab draw insights from network data for operational effects. These social network analysis, mathematical and visualization tools can identify key nodes, connectors, influencers and other measures of networks that would not be apparent in raw data.
- **Network internally and organize for a network approach.** Once networks are mapped and analyzed, it is critical to utilize their information to improve internal networks and organize for an approach more adaptive to their circumstances. In Northeast Syria, the combined State/USAID interagency team and CA company was the critical civil-military networking node. This organizational design effectively linked previously disconnected networks, including local councils, emerging civil societies, NGOs, IGOs and interagency partners. Understanding these networks has allowed for effective coordination and targeting of stabilization assistance in post-ISIS controlled areas.
- **Build layered networks.** Once organized for a networked approach, it is essential to adapt and scale networks through a layered approach. This requires both tactical development and operational integration, as well as identifying complementary and supplementary networks that this approach reveals. This can improve the resiliency of networks and account for gaps among them—as seen early on in the Syrian conflict as CA teams worked in the peripheries in Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon and Turkey. The CA company's layered approach, starting in Qatar, facilitated the successful access and entry of U.S. forces in the Syrian interior once the decision was made to deploy them.

CPT Ordiway provided a case study from his CA team's experience with developing networks in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The U.S. Embassy Sarajevo asked his team to identify CE opportunities at the local level in Republika Srpska (RS), given the difficulty of the Embassy's programmatic approaches and its personnel limitations—not to mention the RS's general aversion to any U.S.-backed initiatives. His team developed civil networks—from local mayors to NASA's Headquarters and Jet Propulsion Laboratory and the Environmental Protection Agency—for Embassy use. Most compelling was its intra-state ethnic and political factors model explained in his *Defense Visual Information Distribution Service* story.⁷ Major lessons included:

- An engagement approach centered on *common problems* is a good recipe for short-term success (e.g., Pliva River flooding across the inter-ethnic boundary). A longer-lasting approach, however, is to find and capitalize on initiatives centering on *common aspirations*. For example, their CA team established a common aspiration by leveraging NASA programs to help educate children.
- Strategic competition undoubtedly requires continuous forward presence, but what we make of that presence is even more critical. For example, each engagement that

the CA team and its successors had with the Jezero mayor coincided with an increasing number and variety of local and U.S. organizations. When the U.S. Ambassador delivered a letter from the NASA Director of the Mars Exploration Program to the mayor, media interest grew from local radio to RS media to regional media throughout the Balkans. When the Perseverance Rover was set to land on Mars, the CA team helped to organize a youth-based “landing party in Jezero”; this was covered by major media in Bosnia-Herzegovina and by the Associated Press. The story eventually spread to National Geographic, ABC, NBC and NPR.

- Teams should be operationalized in the rear to support the forward team. One challenge for rotating CA teams is in maintaining the relationships with established networks; this is particularly difficult because of the risks of burning out these relationships or losing rapport, as teams are often short-term visitors for local partners. This reinforces the common view that, while CA teams may be endearing, their efforts are not enduring. By ensuring continuity of deployed team actions, the CA company remained connected with the forward team, helping ensure unity of effort. Much of this was due to team-to-team succession management and coordinated mission preparation at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. This also helped designated teams maintain constantly updated situational understanding at any point in the rotational cycle.

As the Civil Information Management Cell Chief at Camp Lemonier, Djibouti, in support of *Operation Enduring Freedom – Horn of Africa* (OEF-HOA), CPT Gump related the challenges in Africa with how Russia and China continuously seek access and influence with governments in the region. The Chinese are perceived to have unlimited funds and manpower for highly attractive massive infrastructure projects, presenting dilemmas for U.S. civil and military operators unable to respond symmetrically to that challenge. CA teams at OEF-HOA utilized several initiatives to develop local partnerships. Three of them were: support to the DoD initiative on Women, Peace, and Security; capacity development of local doctors and veterinarians; and an English language discussion group. CA teams engaged with partners from local to senior government levels as well as interagency and interorganizational partners. These CE activities also served as a form of CR, enabling them to better understand social grievances and aspirations at different levels of society. Among their discoveries in military and government agencies was their intense interest to partner with or attract U.S. investors for tourism and other economic opportunities, which proved useful to the U.S. Embassy.

However, they also discovered the population’s low confidence in their own governments to meet local needs. In addition to advocating on local behalf with their governments, CA teams helped identify non-government resources to fill essential service gaps. CPT Sabin’s team, for example, collaborated with the government to refurbish a well to increase local access to water, improving local trust in the government. Joint training with allies and partners to improve local service capacities, such as veterinarian services, proved an excellent mechanism to strengthen and expand networks without compromising them.

The English language discussion groups provided an opportunity for local groups to focus less on their differences while learning English together. At the same time, the CA teams learned to better understand various local network dynamics, helping to frame engagements with government officials better as they advocated for locals based on their knowledge of societal needs gathered through these initiatives.

SGM Melendez acquainted the audience with the Indo-Pacific’s vast scope and scale, as well as its numerous extremes. They provide challenges to how theater Army commands must build strong, regional partnerships within such a complex “neighborhood” through the twin efforts of strategic dialogue and exercises at multiple levels as critical to this goal. He also cited the Defense Institution Reform Initiative (DIRI) strategic framework for general principles in building such relationships.

SGM Melendez had three considerations for CA in building or contributing to regional networks:

- **Strategic Empathy.** We craft campaign plans, operations and orders from various strategic policies and strategies because we know ourselves and our priorities. Similarly, we must continually cultivate an appreciation for the internal pressures (e.g., social, economic, political) that shape our allies’, partners’ and competitors’ ranges of options. CA must go beyond the mere collection of facts to the internalized recognition—and appreciation—of such factors.
- **Security Cooperation and CA Relationship.** There is a very important, albeit underdeveloped, relationship between CA and the security cooperation enterprise. This relationship often goes unnoticed at tactical levels where CA teams concern themselves with achieving “success” in relatively short rotations. Critically, CA elements always ought to consider how their activities either help or hinder long-term security cooperation efforts in a given country.
- **Presence & Engagement.** This is probably the most obvious observation, but it is so critical that it bears repeating often. Partnerships are reciprocal relationships. If you want to be a good neighbor in the Pacific—or anywhere—you must show up, participate and be willing to learn from others. We exchange best practices and learn from one another. Exercises and strategic dialogues provide a great opportunity to bring the team together and build “reps” around common problem sets.

Workshop V – Interagency Coordination for Advancing the Information Element of U.S. Power

The impetus for this year’s interagency workshop comes from how the pervasive threat posed by mis-, mal- and dis-information has grown and evolved over the past decade or so. This is a challenge that straddles the civilian and military aspects of U.S. foreign policy, particularly in strategic competition. It also transcends the strategic tension we sometimes feel, as we adapt to a world centered around strategic competition on the one hand, while also dealing with the continuous challenge of non-state actors on the other. In both types of competition, our adversaries are making malign use of information to further their goals at the expense of the United States and its allies. CA obviously has a lot to contribute to this effort. But there are other key actors across the civil-military spectrum working in this space with whom CA would benefit in networking.

Moderated by Ryan McCannell, a Civil Affairs Association director who works for USAID as Director of the Center for Conflict and Violence Prevention, which is part of the Bureau of Conflict Prevention and Stabilization, the interagency panel focused on the strategic role that information plays as an element of national power. Representatives from four key agencies described the broad range of efforts underway in the information realm, where global and regional networks are adapting to evolving threats and opportunities. They

included: Stevie B. Hamilton, Jr., Director of the Interagency and International Coordination Cell at the State Department's Global Engagement Center (GEC); Mick Crnkovich, Director for Information Operations in the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (DASD) for Special Operations & Combating Terrorism; Mrs. Mirela Bruk, Senior Strategic Program Analyst at the United States Agency for Global Media (USAGM) in the Office of Policy and Research; and Lieutenant Colonel Diana Parzik, Counter-Disinformation Coordinator at USAID's Center of Excellence on Democracy, Human Rights and Governance, and the Commander of the 440th Civil Affairs Battalion in Fort Carson, Colorado.

The discussion started with brief summaries of the organizations' respective contributions in relation to the information element of national power. Although the four featured agencies contribute to the same strategic end—the promotion of democracy and deterrence in the face of mis-, dis- and mal-information operations by violent non-state adversaries and autocratic competitors—the ways and means vary widely. Both USAID and the GEC provide grants and technical assistance to independent media and civil society organizations in host nations to improve media literacy, secure online information sharing and debunk propaganda. State/GEC also plays a critical coordination role across agencies in Washington, at numerous diplomatic posts, and with the media and technology industries; as well as data analysis and policy formulation based on trends and innovations in the information sector.

The United States Agency for Global Media (USAGM) centers its work around the six networks it supports: Voice of America; the Office of Cuba Broadcasting, which oversees Radio and TV Martí; Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty; Radio Free Asia; the Middle East Broadcasting Networks; and a new Open Technology Fund, which provides secure and uncensored access to the internet for those living in information restricted countries. The mechanisms for such support vary across networks, but in all cases, USAGM maintains a legal and operational firewall between the policy-making and coordination functions of the agency itself, and the constellation of independent media networks receiving support. This firewall embodies the U.S. constitutional framework and ensures that supported entities can achieve the highest journalistic standards while remaining free of influence in the content of their reporting. USAGM also maintains coordination networks with like-minded national broadcasting agencies and provides professional education and training to journalists and other key actors in host nations.

Meanwhile, DoD maintains numerous information-related capabilities such as IO, PSYOP, CA and even classic human intelligence activities. Mr. Crnkovich noted that DoD has recently redoubled its efforts to coordinate among these capabilities, at the behest of Congress, including new senior IO advisors undertaking posture reviews to recommend enhancements that should streamline and focus IO capabilities in the near future.

The question-and-answer period focused on two key themes that emerged from this broad overview. The first explored the strengths and weaknesses of the diverse and relatively decentralized U.S. approach to information, as compared to the apparently more focused and centralized means employed by autocratic competitors. Panelists noted that this approach reflects the American political culture and structure of using checks and balances among several competing organizations to avoid a concentration of power and promote a pluralistic approach to solving problems. However, they acknowledged that coordination remains a continuous challenge and that various inefficiencies can result from this approach. What works best is when the White House and other key policy makers articulate clear strategic goals and messages that agencies can rally around. Although it produced an *Interim*

National Security Guidance in March 2021, the Biden Administration is still formulating its national security strategy and installing key political appointments, which explains some of the challenges that agencies face, even as their capabilities continue to grow and evolve.

The second theme was, quite naturally, what role the CA Corps can and should play in today's complex, information-rich environment. Panelists responded that CA is an important and unique capability for civil-military networking and influence, given its dual role of informing commanders about the civil environment while serving as a principal touchpoint for the U.S. military among civilian interlocutors in embassy country teams and host-nation civil society. Moreover, the information environment has changed remarkably in the past decade—what Mr. Crnkovich refers to as “an electronic herd mentality”—where the challenge is ensuring “the speed of command [can] exceed the speed of maneuver.” This challenge required persistent engagement and a clear sense of how the CA mission set contributes to both an embassy country team's overall goals, as well as the DoD's IO architecture.

As LTC Parzik noted, this challenge is complicated by the fact that IO occurs primarily in steady-state and gray-zone environments, where competition is occurring in real time and below the level of traditional warfare. These factors require more sophistication and a somewhat different skill set than CA personnel receive in the course of their qualification courses and other military training. It also requires a change of mindset: CA activities must support the strategic messages that the U.S. Government is attempting to send to civil societies in host nations, rather than perceiving that those messages are broadcast to lay the groundwork for the tactical success of specific construction projects or key-leader engagements. It is therefore incumbent upon the CA Corps to be knowledgeable of and networked with interagency as well as other military information- and influence-related capabilities in order to be strategically shaped to gain and maintain positional advantage in the information environment.

In summary, the information challenge aligns fundamentally with the core strength of CA: its fluency in and comfort with the seams between civilian and military communities. As LTC Parzik put it: “It takes a network to fight a network,” and CA, a premier U.S. civil-military networking capacity, is integral to the information and influence ecosystem in which it—and the commands it supports—operates. As such, the CA Corps is a national strategic landpower capability in advancing U.S. power in the information realm.

Workshop VI – Operation Allies Refuge: Lessons on Interagency and Multinational Collaboration

Following MG Guthrie's keynote observations on civil-military networking from *Operation Allies Welcome* in the United States, there was a similar review of interagency and multinational collaboration in Europe during the associated *Operation Allies Refuge* (OAR). Association Vice-President Colonel Caroline Pogge, who has been posted with the U.S. Army Europe & Africa (USAREUR-AF) as the G39 Civil Affairs Planning Team Chief, steered a rich discussion by an eclectic group of practitioners from across DoD, DoS and the NGO community. They all quickly engaged in the operation from prior to the arrival for the first Afghan travelers in Europe in mid-August through those still involved in operations today. These included:

- Major Susan Graler from the 361st CA Bde, posted at the 21st Theater Support Command at Ramstein Air Base and Rhine Ordnance Barracks to provide active-duty operational support (ADOS) as CA detachment leader

- Ms. Dee Swanier from the American Red Cross, Europe
- Ms. Colleen Denny from the NGO, Spirit of America, Europe
- Captain Josh Black, B Company, 415th CA Battalion CA Team Leader, Camp Liya (Kosovo)
- Lieutenant Colonel Tyler Waterhouse, attached to the Department of State as Military Advisor at the Bureau for Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) in Washington, DC
- Mr. Josh Mater, Department of State, temporarily supporting PRM in Washington, DC
- Ms. Gina Kassem, Department of State (Bucharest), temporarily supporting PRM in Kosovo; and
- Master Sergeant Larry Lloyd from the 308th CA Bde, currently posted as USAREUR-AF G39 OAR lead planner in Wiesbaden, Germany (and also a *2020–21 Civil Affairs Issue Papers* author).

Following quick introductions and a bit of background on organizational roles in OAR, members of the group provided observations, with many of the panel members echoing MSG Lloyd’s comment about the need to establish a network both internal to your organization and external across interorganizational spaces as a function of operational readiness.

Josh Mater, in his opening remarks, noted the importance of recognizing positive as well as negative lessons. “We need to recognize success. It is always easy to identify what went wrong or could go differently, but we need to celebrate all the things we did well despite all the obstacles and significant changes.” He also reinforced Susan Graler’s point about how authorities and funding for complex operations like OAR are clearly identified and delineated, stressing the need for all civil-military players to understand the various respective funding streams, and for what they can be used. For example, an event focused on civil action will no doubt involve CA. “We need to be smart about what can be accessed, such as ODACHA funds. We need to understand who can join the effort and may be able to extend our resources to other partners we may not be able to directly work with.” NGOs, in turn, provide valuable expertise and fill important gaps, such as the American Red Cross in accepting local community donations, and Spirit of America in quickly purchasing items on local markets such as diapers, coats, etc. In order to have a synergistic impact, CA must be knowledgeable of all these things and must be able to speak authoritatively within military commands and DoD offices about these options and how best to integrate CA and partners into operational planning and execution.

In this respect, the panelists also recognized the value of the CA voice both within DoD and also within DoS offices at higher levels. They relayed these more practical points of view and explained the perspectives of partners and affected populations and provided cultural understanding. All of this is incorporated into decisionmaking and planning processes; it should not to be an afterthought, particularly with regard to interagency coordination and funding considerations. For example, people should start by identifying what can be funded by whom, how that funding will operate, what does not need funding, and where there may be duplication of funded efforts with counterproductive or unintended impacts on other actors in the network.

Another point of consensus is the importance for strategic level leadership to understand the impacts of “DC level decisions” on the CA teams and their partners attempting

to operationalize their directives and guidance on the ground. This is prompted by Gina Kassem's stress on the importance of constant vertical and horizontal communication. How to ensure bottom-up as well as top-down communication and enable and manage multiple feedback loops to promote better interorganizational decisionmaking and outcomes (as MG Guthrie noted) is an area that merits particular interagency study and experimentation. This is especially true in the fog of humanitarian assistance in a dynamic and information-rich operational environment with a large, diverse group of actors. Speaking with a more unified voice through jointly amplified messages when raising problems through all hierarchies is critical to building a common executive operational picture and to the kind of decisionmaking that should come from it. Ms. Kassem gave the example of how she and Captain Black coordinated their respective CAT and PRM daily report drafts to ensure that they highlighted issues in mutually supporting ways, enabling better and faster responses.

Colonel Alan McKewan, Division Chief, CCJ3 Interagency Action Group Civil Affairs at USCENTCOM, who has served multiple tours in Afghanistan, provided some additional insights as a participant from the CENTCOM perspective on the same general mission during the same timeline. At CENTCOM, planning started earlier, before June, on a classified platform. Once the determination permitted a shift to unclassified networks, they were able to bring more partners into the conversation who simply could not access information across classified platforms. CA planners in particular need to have a keen understanding of how ground realities compare and contrast with high-level planning; this allows them to mitigate civil-military and interagency issues either lost in translation or unaccounted for. He noted, for example, the early conflict of NEO planning with Special Immigration Visa (SIV) movement requirements, particularly as they were simultaneously happening.

A few of the panelists spoke about the delayed ability of RC CA to get on the ground quickly; this is not surprising, given that authorities and funding for RC CA mobilization and deployment have hardly evolved since the Cold War. Both CENTCOM and EUCOM utilized regionally aligned forces and assigned elements to serve as initial support. While Compo 3 (U.S. Army Reserve) force mobilization is programmed as a backfill option, the reality is that both COMPO 1 and 3 entail intolerable lags to obtain operational support under ADOS orders. This shortfall will be even more keenly felt with the loss of the last active component conventional CA unit, the 83rd CA Battalion. This often necessitates labor-intensive workarounds, such as having CA personnel assigned to Reserve Troop Program Units or reassigned to enable quicker access. The 361st CA Brigade, an Army Reserve CA command, is based in Europe; it has longstanding experience and solid working relations with NATO and other regional partners. They may be the next best solution, with ADOS orders taking about 12 days to produce for TPU CA forces who live and work in-theater, eliminating much of the lag overseas deployment times. (Unfortunately, however, USA-REUR decided two years ago to disband the 361st CA Brigade, but may be reconsidering.)

Workshop VII – Allied and Multinational Approaches to Building Civil-Military Networks

Keeping with the general theme of multinational as well as interorganizational networking, the second day ended with Workshop VII, on allied and multinational approaches to building civil-military networks. Colonel Christopher Holshek, USA, Ret., an Association Vice-President and Distinguished Member of the CA Corps, facilitated the Workshop. Guests included: Colonel Stephanie Tutton, Office of Military Affairs, United Nations;

Major Csaba Szabó, Deputy Branch Chief, Concepts, Interoperability and Capabilities Branch, NATO CIMIC Center of Excellence; Lieutenant Colonel Dave Allen, U.K. Army, formerly Land Warfare Center Irregular Warfare/Engagement Doctrine Focus; and Lieutenant Colonel Vincent Couturier, Plans & Capabilities Development, Influence Activities Task Force (IATF), Department of National Defense, Government of Canada and Major Eric Storm, IATF Plans & Capabilities Development Cell.

Speaking from the CCoE in Den Haag, The Netherlands, MAJ Szabó began by highlighting the major changes of interest in the soon-to-be-approved revisions of NATO Civil-Military Interaction (CMI) policy (MC 411/2) and CIMIC doctrine AJP 3.19. [For those less familiar, CIMIC is the military capability and operational activity for the implementation of CMI under the North Atlantic Council's strategic concept of "comprehensive engagement" (i.e., civil-military and multi-agency engagement).] Among the most noteworthy changes is the greater focus on civil or societal resilience as a way to deal with hybrid warfare on NATO's eastern flank, as explained in NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg remarks at last year's Global Security Conference in Bratislava:

In today's security environment, non-kinetic threats pose as grave a danger as kinetic ones. If NATO is going to be successful, its military capabilities must be backed up by societal resilience in the member states. Without societal resilience, military excellence is useless. Successful resilience involves not just infrastructure but people too. Both the states and NATO need to consider how they ensure that societies are also more resilient in the face of potential shocks.⁸

Updated CIMIC doctrine will place greater emphasis on civil-military engagement to enable greater societal resilience as a civil defense matter, as well as to promote healthier civil societies more resistant to, for example, mis- or dis-information. CIMIC remains a supporting rather than a leading capability in information warfare. The CCoE has already begun to socialize this understanding with an online seminar series, "Societal Resilience – Conceptual Observations Meet Practitioners' Experience," which is accessible on the CCoE website.

At the same time, NATO CIMIC fully embraces the idea of "building a global civil-military network," already having identified its key nexus in a CIMIC-CA enterprise of enterprises in the "CIMIC-CA Synchronization Project" that it forwarded at last year's Symposium and in a corresponding *Issue Paper*. As the doctrinal development and schoolhouse counterpart of the USAJFKSWCS, the CCoE is pursuing greater synchronization of civil-military doctrines in the current update, as well as interorganizational co-learning by opening its online courses to CA personnel, including a primer on CMI/CIMIC. Still, more formalized crosswalks need creation among the enterprises and their corresponding networks.

MAJ Szabó agreed that a truly global civil-military network would not only result in better situational understanding for all players but would also give NATO more diplomatic options with competitor and non-aligned states. "Such a network," he noted, "must be managed and not just established." The better understanding arises in terms of strategic context and on-the-ground cultural and societal dynamics that, in turn, enhance better political-military and civil-military decisionmaking.

Joining us for a second year in a row, COL Dave Allen, reporting from Warminster, U.K., provided a short update on what is now called the "Integrated Operating Framework"

(previously the “Integrated Operating Concept”). The British are moving to a “fusion doctrine” incorporating a multi-layered approach within a continuum of military functions. This approach acts to “protect and engage” (both of which are “operating” functions) and to “constrain” (i.e., deter) and “warfight” (both of which are “warfighting” functions), all in response to great-power competition, transnational challenges and rapid technological changes.

The “protect and engage” operating functions are done constantly in forward areas, mainly by Special Forces and SFABs, to maintain persistent global presence, to deny and assure influence and to “compete at the threshold of conflict.” CE networks, he added, are essential to enabling persistent presence, strengthening old ties while building new relationships, and gaining and maintaining regional expertise. All of this, along the lines of the military functions, serves to anticipate events, reassure allies and partners, and deter and—if necessary—defeat adversaries. Within the Western alliance structure, a major value-added of having various large and small forces is assistance in gaining better access and influence in places where the presence of superpower or former colonial power military forces from the alliance could prove problematic. This is an under appreciated value both of a global-civil-military network and of an alliance structure.

Among such forces are those from Canada. Canadian CIMIC comes under the direction of the Canadian Peace Support Center and the Army’s Influence Activities Task Force (IATF) in Kingston, Ontario, from where LTC Couturier and MAJ Storm provided their contributions. The mission of the IATF is to “promote, enable, and synchronize Influence Activities (IA) capabilities in support of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) across the full spectrum of operations. IATF delivers personnel, training and capability development; and ensures a sustainable, operationally relevant CIMIC and PSYOPS capabilities, ensuring its personnel are operationally deployable anytime and anywhere.”

Given their relatively small sizes, Canadian CIMIC and PSYOP forces are limited in their ability to provide the kind of persistent presence in forward areas that COL Allen discussed, or the robust network among civil-military professionals the Symposium is calling for. Nonetheless, they have turned to innovative uses of technology and information platforms to maintain presence, human connectivity, situational awareness and understanding—including the Association and its Symposium and Roundtable platforms, which they have gratefully participated in since last year.

Among the more interesting practices in Canada is its high level of integration of CA and PSYOP force management and operations. The Canadians use “CIMIC,” “PSYOP” and “influence” more integrally in their operational language. CIMIC-PSYOP teaming for operational support in Afghanistan is now being institutionalized under “Force 2025” transitioning to composite active-reserve CIMIC companies, containing both CIMIC and PSYOP teams in each division. The addition of a PSYOPS C2 element will add flexibility for contingent structuring and will enable greater focus of company resources for civil-military networks. Although no longer operating in Afghanistan, some of these teams remain forward engaged overseas in Latvia and Congo.

At any time, these formations are also available for humanitarian assistance/disaster relief operations, both in foreign, multinational and domestic settings—although, under Canadian doctrine, while CIMIC is both an expeditionary and domestic capability, PSYOP is for expeditionary purposes only. (This is remarkable, given how CA-PSYOP operational

integration remains a struggle in especially conventional U.S. Army formations, albeit coming from the same command.)

Colonel Tutton is a U.S. Army field artillery officer seconded to the directing military staff at the UN headquarters. In a sense, her presence demonstrates access and influence. Greater U.S. military staff involvement at both UN headquarters, as well as military observers in UN field missions, are needed to counter the ambitions and actions of greater power rivals such as Russia and China, which of course are permanent members of the UN Security Council and have more military officers posted at the UN Headquarters and in the field than the United States does.

The forward presence of (currently less than 40) U.S. military personnel in UN field missions simply helps to build good will locally, regionally and internationally. This is in addition to gaining positional advantage through their own access and influence, through experience in multinational coalitions and through improvements in peacekeeping, capacity-building programs. These programs serve as an economy-of-force measure to reduce stabilization concerns, especially in areas of Africa, and to spare the need for a greater U.S. military footprint there. The interest in the UN for reasons of strategic competition is explained in a National Defense University study published before the Symposium.⁹

Of note to USAJKFSWCS and USACAPOC(A), CA officers such as now-retired Major General Hugh Van Roosen, an Association director who has served as a Force Chief of Staff in the UN Mission in Liberia and as Deputy Military Advisor at DPO in New York, as well as COL Holshek, who has had extensive civilian and military service in UN field missions, are ideal for this strategic sensor and enabler role.

COL Tutton reported that the first revision of the UN-CIMIC (in the UN sense, “coordination” rather than “cooperation”) to be undertaken since the original version was first published in 2010 is awaiting approval at the Department of Peace Operations; a new UN-CIMIC operations handbook is soon to be published and is pending the same review. UN-CIMIC is a military staff function that facilitates the interface among the military, police and civilian components of an integrated UN field mission—as well as among the military force and various humanitarian and development actors, local authorities, donor agencies, NGOs, host national government and civil-society organizations. “Civil engagement,” now an operational term in the revised *UN Infantry Battalion Manual*, includes a new requirement for each maneuver battalion to field an “engagement platoon” of four teams of four personnel (much like CAT-A teams). The teams promote civil stability and interact with local authorities and populations, organizations, key political and community leaders, national military and police, and parties to the conflict—all to improve UN mission situational understanding of the “human terrain.”

Unlike U.S., NATO and most national civil-military doctrines, UN-CIMIC is not there solely to enforce the commander’s intent. UN-CIMIC acts as a primary portal for the military component for civilian mission components, for the host nation, for the local civilian population and for humanitarian and development actors. Of note, humanitarian civil-military coordination is well addressed in the “UNCMCoord” enterprise under the aegis of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

As UN military peacekeepers have been mandated to take on expanded responsibilities to provide more support to civilian-led and mandated tasks, UN-CIMIC serves as an important tool within the integrated field mission structure. They develop a comprehensive

civilian operational picture through a Civil-Operational Estimate, and then they support integrated “joint” (i.e., civil-military) planning and military support operations for the mission. For these reasons, UN-CIMIC is as much a UN field mission as a military operations function. While not doctrinally explicit, civil-military networking, in the UN understanding, is integral to multicomponent, multi-agency and civil-military coordination in integrated UN field missions.

Workshop VIII – Civil Affairs Industrial Base: New Gaming Technologies to Train in the Human Domain

One of the best ways the expanded CA Corps can help build a global civil-military network for strategic competition is through the commercial connections that a CA industrial base, in applied social sciences and related technologies, can engender. In a continuation of this general theme, Workshop VIII looked at “New Gaming Technologies to Train in the Human Domain,” led by Colonel Arnel P. David, DACOS G5 NATO Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (U.K.), co-author of *Military Strategy in the 21st Century*, editor of the upcoming book, *Warrior-Diplomats*, and an Association Vice-President. Guest speakers included: Robert Pratten, CEO & Founder of Conducttr—the newest among Association sponsors; Brigadier General Ben Edwards, USA, Ret., Crisis Cast; Brian “Mitch” Mitchell, Founder of Crisis Cast; Francesca Hunt, Co-Founder of Crisis Cast; Dr. Aleksandra (Aleks) Nesic, Chair of the Europe and Eurasian Affairs at the Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State; and Dr. Patrick J. Christian, Lieutenant Colonel, USA, Ret., SF, Founding Partner & Senior Social Scientist at Valka-Mir Human Security—another Association sponsor.

The first technology discussed was Conducttr’s simulation software, which provides a high-fidelity information environment that allows realistic engagement in cyberspace. A whole range of social media engines backed by AI/ML help generate content, conduct analysis and provide feedback. COL David explained that “in defense exercises, we rarely wargame or simulate activity ‘left of bang.’ We routinely start exercises in Phase III with high-intensity warfighting and concentrate on that activity.” Conducttr provides simulation and crisis scenarios which could be brought to bear, early and often, before the fighting begins. Information specialists can test narrative warfare, psychological operations and influence operations in a safe-to-fail environment.

According to Robert Pratten, their “mission is to make everyone’s life an adventure, because it is through adventure that people can achieve their full potential in life.” With their simulation platform, Conducttr creates this virtual sense of adventure through immersive, realistic experiences. Using the same technology, they have helped defense and government organizations simulate hybrid warfare all across Europe. From campaigns to key leader engagements, the software can also scale to meet a wide range of training objectives.

The second technology discussed was developed by Crisis Cast, Valka-Mir and the British Army. It was initially called the Human Domain Matrix and later named Project Tyrion. The matrix of factors to describe the human domain was developed by Dr. Pat Christian and Dr. Aleks Nesic. The virtual reality (VR) and filming technologies came from Crisis Cast. Together, they combined the best of the creative arts and the science of the human domain to build this initial prototype, which was focused on Mali. “We are inhabiting more of a world of emotions and stress behaviors,” Mitchell explained. Beyond the better known concept of cognitive warfare, Dr. Nesic from Valka-Mir pointed out the importance of what she termed “emotional warfare”: “Many of our adversaries and competitors know

how to evoke emotion in people and so how to influence them in ways that we do not even consider,” she explained. “This project brings this dynamic to life in a powerful virtual reality scenario that provides a new way to learn about culture, tribes and human behavior.”

The group’s goal is to make more scenarios focused on a number of landscapes across the world to improve frontline personnel (military, diplomatic and development workers) performance in the human domain. The project has already brought the motion capture and technical leads from such movies as the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, *Mad Max: Fury Road* and the *Star Wars: The Mandalorian* series. They also had high-end AI companies integrate their technology into the background of the platform.

“The real power behind these projects is the speed with which these prototypes and projects were funded and delivered,” COL David highlighted. “What normally took years was accomplished in only months, and that is truly incredible.” He closed by asking leaders in the audience to consider, “How often are you exercising the core business of your profession? Going beyond the normal shoot, move and communicate? Is it a few times a year, or just once? These simulations could be used all throughout the year, and at all levels. Imagine what they could do for individuals, teams and entire organizations.”

Civil Affairs Issue Papers

The Symposium culminated with the presentation of the five papers selected to be included in this publication. Authors competed for best paper presentation cash prizes of \$1,000 (first); \$500 (second); and \$250 (third). The winners were (in order of ballots casted):

- *Civil Affairs and Great-Power Competition: Civil-Military Networking in the Gray Zone*
by Sergeant First Class Nicholas Kempenich, Jr., USA
- *Innovation as a Weapon System: Cultivating Global Entrepreneur and Venture Capital Partnerships*
by Major Giancarlo Newsome, USA, Colonel Bradford Hughes, USA, and Lieutenant Colonel Tyson Voelkel, USA
- *Maximum Support, Flexible Footprint: Civilian Applied Research Laboratories to Support the 38G Program*
by Dr. Hayden Bassett and Lieutenant Kate Harrell, USNR
- *Individualism versus Collectivism: Civil Affairs and the Clash of National Strategic Cultures*
by Colonel Marco A. Bongioanni, USA
- *Back to Basics: Civil Affairs in a Global Civil-Military Network*
by Major Jim Munene, USA, and Staff Sergeant Courtney Mulhern, USA

Issue Paper Committee Chairman retired Brigadier General Bruce Bingham noted how this year’s crop—in addition to discussing the past, present and future of CA—had some unusually “out of the box” thinking, e.g., an organizational restructuring of humanitarian assistance at embassies, the expansion of an existing prototype applied research lab in academia, and private sector entrepreneurial investment opportunities where CA teams should play a more robust and impactful role in strategic competition.

The papers, published here with this Symposium Report, constitute the eighth volume of the *Civil Affairs Issue Papers*. Authors will also discuss them more on the *OneCA* podcast on the Association website. Previous volumes and the summaries of the current papers are also available on the Association website.

Final Remarks

Association President Colonel Joe Kirlin, USA, Ret., closed out the three-day forum, noting the importance of continuity and resilience in the Association’s effort to “educate, advocate, and motivate” through platforms such as the Symposium, Roundtable, *Issue Papers*, *Eunomia Journal*, *OneCA* podcasts and others that help the CA Corps to advocate through engagement of key civil and military institutional leadership.

These Association platforms are more valuable than ever, he noted, because CA and its ability to “secure the victory” have even more relevance today, in strategic competition, than they have had in past eras of major combat operations and post-conflict reconstruction. With this understanding, Army and national defense leadership could more effectively provide military support to U.S. and allied competition with adversarial powers and illicit networks.

Along with his thanks to the CA community, its allies from around the world and its organizational partners, all for their robust participation, he noted that the Association will continue to grow its resources as well as expand its convening role in interorganizational collaboration in order to promote a worldwide enterprise of civil-military enterprises—the original intent of the Worldwide Civil Affairs Conferences that took place each year during and after the Cold War. He looks forward to continuing that endeavor at the online Roundtable in April 2022 and at an in-person meeting sometime next year.

The full videos of the Symposium and its workshops are viewable on the *Eunomia Journal* YouTube channel. For more information, and to access all the above-mentioned platforms and stay updated, please visit the Civil Affairs Association website at <https://www.civilaffairsassoc.org>.



Colonel Christopher Holshek, USA, Ret., Vice President for Military Affairs in the Civil Affairs Association, co-organizes the annual Symposia and Roundtables and co-edits the Civil Affairs Issue Papers. A 2017 Distinguished Member of the Civil Affairs Corps, he is a Civil-Military Director at Narrative Strategies, LLC, Senior Civil-Military Advisory at the NATO Resilient Civilians working group and Senior Civil-Military Fellow at the Alliance for Peacebuilding. His book, Travels with Harley: Journeys in Search of Personal and National Identity, reflects experiences and insights gained from three decades in CA at all levels and across the full competition continuum and in the joint, interorganizational and multinational environments.

Notes

- ¹ General James C. McConville, USA, *Army Multi-Domain Transformation Ready to Win in Competition and Conflict*, Chief of Staff Paper #1 (Unclassified Version) (Washington, DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army), 16 March 2021, i.
- ² Bryce Loidolt, *Doing Well by Doing Good? Strategic Competition and United Nations Peacekeeping* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic Research Institute for National Strategic Studies National Defense University, September 2021).
- ³ Colonel Christopher Holshek, USA, Ret., *2021 Civil Affairs Roundtable Report - Roundtable Identifies Opportunity for Civil Affairs to Help Shape 'Competition,'* (Fort Bragg, NC: The Civil Affairs Association, 6 May 2021), 2.
- ⁴ Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-57, *Civil Affairs Operations* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, July 2021), 1-5.
- ⁵ FM 3-57, 1-6.
- ⁶ FM 3-57, 1-10.
- ⁷ Ben Ordiway, "U.S. SOF Civil Affairs: Bring Worlds Together," *Defense Visual Information Distribution Service*, 19 April 2021.
- ⁸ NATO, "Keynote Speech by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg at the Global Security 2020 (GLOBSEC) Bratislava Forum" (as delivered), 17 October 2021, www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_178605.htm.
- ⁹ Loidolt, *Doing Well by Doing Good? Strategic Competition and United Nations Peacekeeping*.

Civil Affairs and Great-Power Competition: Civil-Military Networking in the Gray Zone

by Sergeant First Class Nicholas Kempenich, Jr., USA

Introduction

U.S. Army Civil Affairs (CA) operates in an area of interest to provide current civil information for the interagency common operational picture.¹ CA teams serve as strategic enablers and sensors to support the strategic objectives of the chief of mission (COM). These four-person teams provide a low-signature capability to embed within a U.S. country team, capable of operating in austere environments with limited support. Despite these features, CA must be capable of operating autonomously to win access and influence in strategic competition in the gray zone (between war and peace).² CA NCOs work in many offices for defense or security cooperation (ODCs/OSCs) in Africa as humanitarian assistance subject matter experts. Despite their values-added to the U.S. Africa Command (USAF-RICOM) J5, CA NCOs remain underutilized in developing common operating pictures for geographic combatant commands (CCMDs) and their interagency and interorganizational partners. To address this gap, the U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) should capitalize on the best practices of CA operations (CAO) and help create humanitarian assistance offices (HAOs) at country team level under Title 10 authority in support of Title 22 (Foreign Relations and Intercourse) activities. The HAO could conduct steady-state operations to fill information gaps and build civil-military networks to compete in great-power competition (GPC) within the gray zone. This would help position regional U.S. capacities to gain even further advantage as a ready-to-go main contributor to multinational humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) operations, providing U.S. leadership for these and other contingencies.

At the House of Representatives Committee on Armed Forces in April 2021, USAF-RICOM Commander General Stephen J. Townsend outlined his theater campaign objectives in Africa. These include gaining and maintaining strategic access and influence; disrupting violent extremist organizations' threats to U.S. interests; responding to crises to protect U.S. national interests; and coordinating action with allies and partners to achieve shared security objectives.³ With a constant presence in the region, CA's role in civil-military integration, under interagency and DoD stabilization frameworks, enables a whole-of-government approach and continuity under the direction of the ODC/OSC. CA provides the operational expertise to work by, with and through partner nation military, non-governmental organizations and intergovernmental organizations to support theater campaign plans. To further CA's influence in Africa, creating HAOs in stable countries would help theater commanders like Townsend meet their campaign objectives to compete in strategic competition at the regional level. HAOs provide a continuity that can capitalize on placement and access and provide an interagency and interorganizational common operating picture.³

An HAO would build a civil-military network by, with and through regional organizational and partner nation military and civilian sectors to identify marginalized or disenfranchised populations and to build relationships with local formal and informal leaders in the

area of operations (AOR). The establishment of a steady-state civil-military network provides a distinct positional advantage in GPC in a stable country. Hence, the network is in place to degrade or legitimize the government if the country becomes a failed state through a civil uprising or coup. The HAO would assist the ODC/OSC with foreign humanitarian assistance (FHA) capabilities in collaborating with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the United Nations (UN) and other agency capabilities in support to partner nations. The office can prepare for a crisis in the event of a natural or human-made disaster and support humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. Through FHA, the office can capitalize on placement and access in a denied or isolated area.

One limitation of the current country team construct is that ODCs/OSCs in Africa are not well positioned to conduct civil reconnaissance (CR)—strategically, operationally or tactically. The new office would use CA’s CR capabilities, at all levels, to map the human terrain and provide real-time information for an interagency and interorganizational common operating picture. Through CR and civil-military engagement (CME), the HAO can identify critical infrastructure capacities and vulnerabilities in the region and provide ground-truths on the human geography in the area of interest. This enables a predesignated staging location in case of a crisis and even if the country becomes a failed state. The office will assist the ODC/OSC in identifying partner nation military shortfalls at the tactical level. The ability to assist the partner nation military will allow CCMDs to help the United States and its allies compete with and conduct anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) against Chinese and Russian gray-zone influence.

Civil Affairs Operations at the ODC/OSC

At the 2021 Civil Affairs Symposium, U.S. Army Pacific Civil-Military Operations Planner Sergeant Major Chris Melendez suggested three considerations for the role of CA in general and the CA NCO in particular in building or contributing to regional networks in security cooperation settings and in GPC.⁴ The first is strategic empathy. We craft campaign plans, operations and orders from various strategic policies and strategies because we know ourselves and our priorities. Similarly, we must continually cultivate an appreciation for the internal pressures (e.g., social, economic, political) that shape our allies’, partners’ and competitors’ range of options. CA must go beyond the mere collection of facts to the internalized recognition—and appreciation—of such factors.

Next is the important, albeit underdeveloped, relationship between CA and the security cooperation enterprise. This relationship often goes unnoticed at tactical levels where CA teams concern themselves with achieving “success” in relatively short rotations. Critically, CA elements ought to consider how their activities either help or hinder long-term security cooperation efforts in a given country.

The third consideration is the need for constant presence and engagement. Partnerships, Melendez pointed out, are reciprocal relationships. If you want to be a good neighbor in the Pacific—or anywhere—you must show up, participate, exchange best practices and learn from your partners. Exercises and strategic dialogues provide a great opportunity to bring the team together and build “reps” around the common problem sets. In the sense of GPC, this reflects what former Army Futures Command Deputy Commanding General Lieutenant General Eric J. Wesley, USA, Ret., simply stated at the 2021 Civil Affairs Roundtable: “You can’t compete if you’re not there.”⁵

Currently, there are 21 CA NCO positions at the ODCs/OSCs throughout Africa. The CA NCOs operate in the gray zone, where, in most cases, there are no other special operations forces (SOF) or any other information-related capabilities present. The continued operations in USAFRICOM's AOR compete in GPC to counter Chinese and Russian regional influence. Meanwhile, CA NCOs can capitalize on their experience to conduct long-familiar CA tasks in support of U.S. GPC with limited to no resources and with a more strategic, whole-of-government approach to support diplomacy, informational, military and economics (DIME) and to include finance, intelligence, the rule of law and development. Their support is highly valuable to the U.S. embassies in meeting strategic objectives outlined by the COM and the CCMD.

In most countries, CA NCOs are contributing to competition in the gray zone with no additional DoD support. CA identifies critical vulnerabilities through the local population and leverages USAID, the CDC, the UN and other agencies to provide relief within the marginalized or disenfranchised populations. The lack of DoD presence in countries is a detriment to developing a common operating picture. CA complements the U.S. embassy to help it support U.S. GPC with additional funding expertise and knowledge to navigate systems to meet the end state. To undermine Chinese and Russian influence in AFRICOM's AOR, it is now more important than ever to expand CA forward presence for persistent engagement to support GPC.

One tool that CA NCOs can employ is Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster and Civic Aid (OHDACA) funding. In many embassies, the ODC/OSC allows CA NCOs to manage this program on its behalf. CA NCOs leverage local media and news outlets to publicize OHDACA-funded projects. The resulting publicity helps undermine Chinese and Russian influence. Moreover, these projects' effects are maximized by CA NCOs' expertise in collaborating with international, regional and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other local actors.

Another positional advantage that CA NCOs can enhance in the ODC/OSC is bridging the civil-military gap through collaboration with USAID and the CDC. Cooperation with U.S. embassy agencies assists the COM in achieving integrated country strategy (ICS) objectives. Often, agencies do not understand what the ODC/OSC can provide until FHA equipment starts arriving in-country. CA NCOs help bridge the gap among USAID, the CDC, the UN and other agencies to develop standard operating procedures for FHA projects. Greater U.S. embassy situational understanding and unity of effort among its dedicated capabilities improve the capacity for GPC. The CA NCOs' accomplishments also speak volumes for CA's values-added and open the door for future military-to-military and CME and training to contend with China's and Russia's influence in partner nation militaries, enhancing U.S. forces as the partner of choice for security cooperation.

The collaboration with these agencies assisted in identifying shortfalls in the medical infrastructure and the partner nation's ability to react to requests from HADR or crises. The COVID-19 pandemic impacted the AFRICOM AOR because of the pandemic's stress on the inadequate medical infrastructure. CA NCOs were able to assist USAID and the CDC through OHDACA funding to provide critical relief through personal protective equipment (PPE) and other supplies to slow the spread of COVID-19 in Africa. CA's continued presence in Africa assisted in interagency cooperation and cross-border communication through other U.S. ODCs/OSCs to find the best way forward to slow the infection rate and the best practices for COVID-19 relief through OHDACA funding. CA collaborated

with the public affairs office (PAO) at the U.S. embassies and with the USAFRICOM PAO, highlighting their ability to cooperate with interagency partners and utilize assistance through OHDACA funding. The social media posts and newspaper articles in African cyberspace helped the United States gain narrative and influence-related positional advantages over its great-power adversaries in the region. The ODC/OSC can capitalize on placement and access that the FHA projects provide by filling information gaps, providing interagency and interorganizational common operating picture and building an extended civil and civil-military network in Africa.

The Capitalization of CAO in the U.S. Embassy

CA must sustain its presence in countries to stay competitive in GPC in the gray zone. Currently, CANCO representation has paid dividends on meeting strategic objects through projects in USAFRICOM's AOR. Their constant presence in countries with limited-to-no SOF or information-related elements will assist in developing a common operating picture, building civil networks, filling critical information gaps and helping position U.S. capacities to gain and maintain strategic access and influence (per AFRICOM Campaign Objective 1). The CA NCOs working in the ODC/OSC cannot build a civil network alone, conduct CR and CME or fill information gaps in the operational environment. However, helping to create and populate HAOs in stable countries will achieve General Townsend's first campaign objective more rapidly and effectively.

The lack of CME reporting undermines the potential of building a network in a steady state to compete in GPC. Conducting CR and CME to build civil-military networks will assist in future operations if a state fails. In addition, the ability to conduct civil-military analysis and reporting supports the inputs into interagency and interorganizational common operating pictures. The other aspect that will assist CA is gathering information to fill requests for information (RFIs). Agencies represented at U.S. embassies can capitalize on civil knowledge and information gained through CR, CME and key leader engagements to fill critical information gaps.

CA works through the ODC/OSC to leverage FHA, allowing CA to reach remote areas and capitalize on the freedom of movement of such small-footprint teams. By conducting FHA, CA helps build civil-military networks that improve positional advantage in GPC. Building a civil-military network in a steady state will also benefit the interagency community and USAFRICOM to help the United States compete in the gray zone.

As the opportunity arises, CA can also conduct nation assistance through stability operations. The ability of CA to operate autonomously helps build a civil network to complement the ODC/OSC and the defense attaché office. Conducting building partner capacity (BPC) through civil-military operations (CMO) will help build legitimacy within the partner nation military and the local population. CA can also work directly with the partner nation military to conduct stability operations to enhance civil-military relationships within the country. CA can conduct key leader engagements with the local population to identify vulnerabilities for the U.S. embassy. Also, CA can closely advise a partner nation military to conduct CMO to support counterterrorism, counternarcotic and other operations in the region. CA has abundantly demonstrated these competition-related capabilities in the gray zone because they are among CA core competencies. The best way forward is to allocate CA teams for the HAOs that operate autonomously in stable countries that work under such familiar conditions.

The Creation of HAO

The current organizational structure is suboptimal for CA because it does not leverage the instruments of national power—DIME—to their fullest potential.⁶ The proposed HAO would leverage the whole-of-government approach to complement other DIME actors and assist the geographic CCMD and other agencies in filling information gaps within the country.⁷

The HAO would put senior CA operators in a position to make effective decisions to support U.S. strategic competition and leverage outside entities to meet related CCMD objectives. To have a holistic approach, CA must have well-rounded subject matter experts, including functional areas specialists, who can connect tactical operations to strategic goals outlined by the CCMD and the ICS. CA can engage and leverage the civil component in the AOR to provide the ground-truth of the operational environment and real-time information for the interagency and interorganizational common operating picture.

The ability of the HAO to leverage the different programs would complement the existing projects in the country, but would also identify and fill information gaps where there are no elements. The HAO would work in the joint, interorganizational and multinational (JIM) environment to leverage state and non-state actors to meet strategic objectives outlined by CCMD and the ICS.⁸ The low presence of CA in ODCs/OSCs has squandered CA's ability to conduct CR and CME and gain civil knowledge and information in the gray zone to build civil-military networks. The HAO would naturally conduct operations that build civil-military networks in the gray zone to fill information gaps; therefore, if a country starts to collapse and becomes a failed state, the necessary civil-military relationships to mitigate unintended effects would already be in place.

The HAO would need to assist the ODC/OSC in the partner nation HADR-related military training to stay competitive in the gray zone. Most countries cannot use funding for tactical level training, and China and Russia have capitalized on these shortfalls. The HAO would identify the training gaps and elements to assist the ODC/OSC and the U.S. embassy in training the partner nation military in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. Military-to-military relations would become an asset to building partner capacity and having a partner force to conduct stability as well as HADR operations in the gray zone.

Creating the doctrine for the HAO position would outline the position and activities conducted in the office. Since CA would be working relatively independently, the doctrine must capture the whole-of-government approach to meet stated strategic objectives. Conducting CMO to build a civil-military network in the gray zone with no SOF assets will account for the possibility that the state might collapse under pressure. In addition, the HAO may be the sole representation of SOF in the country, allowing CA to be a force for competition and influence—locally, regionally and strategically.

The functions of HAO would complement special operations to meet strategic objectives outlined by the CCMD campaign plan and the *National Security Strategy* and *National Defense Strategy*. The ability for CA to represent the defense community in areas with limited U.S. forces will greatly enhance special operations to contribute to strategic competition in the gray zone. China and Russia are increasing their influence in the regions under the U.S. radar because either they are not sensed as terrorist threats or the countries in question are considered stable. The COM, however, can support strategic competition through Title 10 and Title 22 confidently with the assistance of CA leveraging its FHA, BPC and nation assistance expertise to meet the ICS objectives.

General Townsend noted that “despite emerging opportunities, the People’s Republic of China and Russia currently have the inside track in much of central and southern Africa.”⁹ With the creation of HAOs in more stable countries, CA operators can help identify information gaps on the human geography, improve the interagency and interorganizational common operating picture and build a civil-military network to significantly help the United States gain the access and influence that characterize positional advantage in strategic competition. The office would be essential to achieve the campaign plan objectives and to maintain a persistent civil-military presence. It would have a low-signature footprint through interagency and interorganizational cooperation to build a civil-military network. Through a doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel and facilities (DOTMLPF) framework, the office would be successful by leveraging CA expertise for GPC in the gray zone:

- **Doctrine:** CA doctrine highlights the importance of building civil networks and gathering information in an AOR. The ability to have accurate and real-time information drives military operations. To help the United States compete in the gray zone, CA must be able to freely and widely leverage JIM partners. CA civil preparation of the battlefield would enhance the HAO’s ability. New doctrine that drives real-time information in the area of interest needs to be established for CA to operate autonomously to support the strategic objectives outlined by the COM and CCMD.
- **Organization:** The HAO would maintain personnel who can operate individually and understand the whole-of-government approach. The HAO would be under the operational control of the CCMD and fall under the COM’s authority.
- **Training:**
 - The Security Cooperation Management Overseas Course would give those assigned to HAOs an overview of the ODC/OSC and how they support USAFRI-COM, J5.
 - The Special Warfare Operational Design Course is an operational planning course that would assist these individuals on future operations and how to integrate political-military and civil-military objectives. Planning and the creation of products would be essential to the HAO’s success.
 - Personnel assigned to HAOs would be graduates of the Joint Humanitarian Operations Course at USAID’s Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance.
 - The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) Civil-Military Coordination (UN CMCoord) Course provides the knowledge that HAO personnel need to support HADR under international standards, as well as UN humanitarian agencies present in the region or country.
- **Materiel:** Civil-military sharing architecture outlined by FM 3-57 provides the best mechanism to support the civil component in the operational environment by providing information to the interagency. Information sharing provides real-time information to update the common operating picture.¹⁰
- **Leadership:** The CCMD will direct the operations to fill information gaps, and the defense attaché office will interconnect all efforts between DoD offices at the U.S. embassies to prevent duplication of efforts.
- **Education:** Joint-level professional military education is essential to understanding operations at joint headquarters and how information drives intelligence for future

operations. Although civilian education is not a requirement, a bachelor's degree would also be highly recommended. In an embassy environment, an educational background is important and helps build rapport.

- **Personnel:** The HAO CA team would include seasoned CA team leaders and team sergeants to provide experienced leadership and expertise to enable the team to effectively conduct operations. These individuals should have at least 60 months of CAO experience. Previous U.S. embassy experience would also be desirable.
- **Facilities:** CA personnel posted at the HAO would need an appropriate office or desk space at the U.S. embassy to develop products that support the CCMD and COM's objectives. As part of the HAO, they would have access to the State Department's International Cooperative Administrative Support Services (ICASS), which they must understand.
- **Policy:** The civil-military policies the HAO would produce would come largely through CAO activities and core competencies that CA personnel would bring. Interagency policies would drive production through the defense attaché office and intelligence communities to assist the embassy in achieving its ICS objectives while filling information gaps for the CCMD. New HAO policies at USSOCOM should outline CA authorities to build civil networks in areas of interest to the COM and the CCMD.

Conclusion

The past 20 years of war have demonstrated the value of working with partners and proxies through unconventional warfare, foreign internal defense and other security assistance programs. This includes strengthening alliances such as NATO to counter Russia and developing new partnerships in the Indo-Pacific region to counter China at the strategic level. These partnerships demonstrate the necessity of building partner nation and regional civil-military networks that cross borders to accomplish operational and strategic objectives. Whereas tactical-level CA teams are proficient at developing local networks, at the joint level, there continue to be issues of tying tactical-level networks to the operational level to achieve sustainable strategic effects.

An HAO initiative would go far to fill these gaps. Maintaining a persistent presence in the gray-zone GPC is not only a vital element in that setting: the positional advantages of "strengthening alliances and attracting new partners" can easily translate into strategic and operational success in both SOF and conventional forms of warfare, should the need arise. The continuous forward presence of CA personnel in the ODC/OSC is the key to the success of this initiative. An HAO would be an excellent way of leveraging synchronized SOF and conventional CA, to the benefit of both, as well as other critical information-related capabilities. More important, at the country team level, it would operationalize civil-military integration of government and non-government capacities. It would be a clear demonstration of defense support of the interagency stabilization effort in the steady state of strategic competition, not just for contingencies.

As a USSOCOM initiative, it is fully in line with the SOF imperatives of understanding the environment; recognizing political implications; facilitating interagency activities; engaging threats discriminately; considering long-term effects; ensuring legitimacy and credibility of U.S. operations; developing multiple options; ensuring long-term sustainment; and providing sufficient intelligence in the forms of situational awareness and understanding

as well as promoting a common political-military, civil-military, bilateral and multilateral picture. This, in turn, helps to win the battle of the narrative in gray-zone GPC.

Moreover, it validates the most important SOF truth: humans are more important than hardware.

CA NCOs have shown their importance for building relationships in the ODC/OSC through interagency cooperation and assisting in identifying critical shortfalls of medical infrastructure during the COVID-19 pandemic. CA NCOs have operated in the gray zone with great confidence to compete in GPC to undermine the growing presence of China and Russia. Decades of operations in major combat and stabilization operations have also demonstrated the values-added of CA NCOs that can apply to support gray-zone strategic competition at the ODC/OSC level, furthering U.S. access and influence in the region. The continued efforts by CA to expand its influence will only enhance its civil-military network in stable countries. With the momentum that CA is gaining, the time is now to further its influence by creating a new office that can effectively operate and conduct operations to build civil-military networks in the gray zone to support diplomatic as well as military objectives.



Sergeant First Class Nicholas Kempenich, Jr., is the Civil Affairs NCO in the Office of Defense Cooperation in Kigali, Rwanda. He earned his MA in International Relations with an emphasis on International Security from Norwich University.

Notes

- ¹ Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 3-57, *Civil-Military Operations* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2018), vii.
- ² Captain Philip Kapusta, “The Gray Zone,” white paper, United States Joint Special Operations Command, 2015, <https://info.publicintelligence.net/USSOCOM-GrayZones.pdf>.
- ³ General Stephen Townsend, “Africa: Securing U.S. Interests, Preserving Strategic Options,” *United States of America Representatives Committee on Armed Forces* (Washington, DC: 20 April 2021).
- ⁴ “CA Symposium 2021 Regional Networks,” *Eunomia Journal* YouTube channel, 16 November 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wPNI0IDh6Nc>.
- ⁵ Colonel Christopher Holshek, USA, Ret., *Civil Affairs Roundtable Report: Roundtable Identifies Opportunity for Civil Affairs to Help Shape “Competition”* (Fort Bragg, NC: Civil Affairs Association, 6 May 2021), 2.
- ⁶ Joint Chiefs of Staff, JP Note 1-18, *Strategy* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2018), vii.
- ⁷ Major Otha J. Holmes, “Whole of Government Approach: Maximizing Unity of Effort Between the Department of Defense (DoD) Department of State (DoS) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID),” master’s thesis, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 2013, <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a599072.pdf>.
- ⁸ Lieutenant Colonel Ricky L. Simmons, “Competencies to Attain a Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental and Multinational Perspective,” Strategy Research Project, U.S. Army War College, 2009, <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a494777.pdf>.
- ⁹ Townsend, op. cit.
- ¹⁰ Department of the Army, Field Manual 3-57, *Civil Affairs Operations* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, July 2021).

Innovation as a Weapon System: Cultivating Global Entrepreneur and Venture Capital Partnerships

by Major Giancarlo Newsome, USA, Colonel Bradford Hughes, USA,
& Lieutenant Colonel Tyson Voelkel, USA

Introduction

As the *Irregular Warfare Annex to the National Defense Strategy* forewarned, state and non-state actors will increasingly seek to win without fighting in the gray zone of irregular warfare (IW) just short of major combat operations.¹ The United States and its allies need to learn how to better fight on this battlefield. General George S. Patton, Jr., stated, “Wars are not won by fighting battles; wars are won by choosing battles.”² Civil Affairs (CA) is the Army branch that can help choose and win the complex civil sector battles in the Multi-Domain Operations environment.

China’s present execution of its Military-Civil Fusion Development Strategy, “Made in China 2025” objectives and Belt and Road Initiative are in effect civil-military, non-kinetic IW battlefields with little contest.³ Whether in advance of or in the wake of large-scale combat operations, geographic combatant commanders (GCCs) need CA to help them win the underlying IW battles. However, unlike other Army branches, such as aviation, CA does not have a strong private sector industrial base or strong congressional support to help it accomplish this important mission.

This paper presents a solution that does not require congressional approval, additional appropriations or any difficult Army reorganization or regulatory changes. Innovation as a Weapon System is a “ready now,” step-by-step process already proven in the commercial marketplace. It allows CA to connect trusted local entrepreneurs they work with to the unequaled good faith and ingenuity of America’s international venture capital and entrepreneur networks. The engagement of these two instruments of national power, in the spirit of the post–World War II Marshall Plan, gives CA the private sector industrial base it needs and gives the Army enduring victories in the civil considerations of the IW battlefield.

Innovation as a Weapon System Is CERP 2.0

Innovation as a Weapon System plays off the name and concept of the well-known “Money as a Weapon System”⁴ Commander’s Emergency Relief Program (CERP) projects, which provided billions of congressionally funded taxpayer dollars to tactical units in Iraq and Afghanistan. CERP projects met humanitarian relief and reconstruction needs at the local level.⁵ Innovation as a Weapon System presents an alternate, more accountable and more enduring means to fund civil-military collaboration and networking. It proposes that a new type of private investment fund—called impact investment funds—will welcome the opportunity to partner with venture capitalists and entrepreneurs in contested operational environments where the Army has a security and stability support mission. The investors behind impact investment funds just need to be invited and guided as to where, in whom and in what to invest. 75th Innovation Command officers and CA 38G reserve functional

specialists were explicitly appointed to the 38G military occupational specialty (MOS) in consideration of their civilian industry prowess and their work with their in-country CA active officer (38S) and active NCO (38R) counterparts. They are the ideal guides for attracting and activating these unique investment communities to invest in CA missions.

Venture Capitalists Are the Special Operations Forces in Private Sector Warfare

Of all the private sector organizations that could help CA, venture capitalists and the entrepreneurs whom they carefully select and fund are the most astute and rigorous in leveraging their capital to achieve desired civil sector outcomes. If the Army wants to win in competition, venture capitalists are the special operations forces of civil sector economic competition and collaboration. Unlike taxpayer-funded CERP money, venture capitalists and entrepreneurs have very personal “skin in the game”; they bet their own money to accurately “hear around the corner” and so, in the long term, to win in the civil sectors in which they have invested.

Innovation as a Weapon System is a process that gives GCCs free “Special Forces Grade” intellectual and financial capital to help them achieve their near-term objectives. In addition, most international venture capital investments create enduring transnational alliances and partnerships, a key tenet of successful security cooperation. Per the doctrinal update in Army Field Manual (FM) 3-0, *Operations*, Innovation as a Weapon System supports the emphasis of “consolidating gains” and makes military objective achievement enduring.⁶

Innovation as a Weapon System Is Doctrinally Aligned

The latest FM 3-57, *Civil Affairs Operations*, states in its introduction:

The Army executes operations across multiple domains and in complex environments. One of the most complex environments is the land domain—partially due to the societal systems (detailed in Joint Publication 3-57) woven into the operational environment. The Army refers to these societal systems as operational variables. These operational variables are political, military, economic, social, information, infrastructure, physical environment, and time. Disagreements, perceived grievances, and divergent cultural and political views within these systems may contribute to instability and conflict among the indigenous populations and institutions that can be exploited by adversaries, or otherwise interfere with military operations.⁷

In all of these variables, there is always a hidden backbone of finance and commerce in hopeful entrepreneurs. The Innovation as a Weapon System process seeks to help find, guide and fund these entrepreneurs to be the Army’s indigenous “weapon systems” for good—for regaining and maintaining “control of the civil component of the operational environment” where needed. The FM 3-57 introduction goes on to say, “Leaders must consider all factors that make up their operational environment—such as social factors that initiate and sustain conflict and those existing capabilities within the resident population that can be leveraged or enhanced to create stability and reduce conflict.”

Entrepreneurs and any form of supporting venture capital to which they have access are the ideal “resident population,” key leaders who can be “enhanced to create stability and reduce conflict.” In many situations, there are also powerful diasporas that could be recruited to help.⁸ Entrepreneurs by nature are free and independent thinkers. They are

natural promoters of American and NATO ideologies for free markets and free persons. Most entrepreneurs understand that supporting stability operations and reducing conflict and corruption allow them freedom to find opportunities. Innovation as a Weapon System seeks to assemble these benefits for the GCC. Helping resident population vetted entrepreneurs and venture capitalists succeed by partnering them with their best-in-class entrepreneurs and venture capitalist peers from the United States, NATO countries and their partners can score many enduring civil sector wins.

Entrepreneurs and Venture Capitalists Are Natural Warfighting Partners

Entrepreneurs and venture capitalists live and die by the quality of their own version of intelligence preparation of the battlespace (IPB). Entrepreneurs and venture capitalists have the sharpest acumen and civil reconnaissance (CR) skill in the civil sectors in which they work. Their due diligence for securing their return-on-investment outcomes is unequalled. They are masters in knowing how to assemble the right diversity of talent, influences, collaborations, technologies, competitive analysis and funds to win new, ambiguous and irregular markets. With mass, economy of force, surprise, etc., venture capitalists apply a business version of the nine principles of war to achieve their civil sector victories.⁹ Army acquisitions and training can never adapt fast enough to compete in IW, but it can engage venture capitalists who can.

This public-private investment collaboration construct gives GCCs highly adaptable CR and information operations (IO) sensor capabilities and strengthens successful CA execution of their core competencies of civil-military integration, civil network development and engagement (CNDE), civil knowledge integration (CKI) and transitional governance.¹⁰

Entrepreneurs and venture capitalists also make for great CA operators. The Army has collaborated with trusted educators to coordinate security forces and other Army services to help restore school openings for host nation communities—imagine if the Army could do the same for vetted local entrepreneurs and venture capitalists. Innovation as a Weapon System provides a checklist for the Army, through CA facilitation, to guide and share the positive effects these entrepreneurial gladiators bring to the communities they serve. As adversarial powers and actors conduct subversive economic acts short of armed conflict, CA can activate teams of entrepreneurs and venture capital-friendly forces to help identify, understand and counter those acts. These entrepreneurs and venture capitalists can help the Army reclaim contested civil sectors.

Entrepreneur and Venture Capital Partnerships Give CA an Innovative Industrial Base

The U.S. Army requires the CA branch to inform commanders of the opportunities and threats within the civil considerations of the battlefield. This is the *C* in the METT-TC (mission, enemy, terrain, troops available—time and civilian considerations) mnemonic of mission and operations planning.¹¹ “Civilian considerations” of the battlefield are arguably broader and more complex than the other variables. Furthermore, unlike other Army branches, perhaps due to the extremely broad nature of potential civil sector threats, CA has no industrial base to draw from. Consider how Army aviation, armor, artillery and other Army branches and organizations have established industries full of world-class entrepreneurs, talent, technology, capital and legislative affairs to help them tackle an arguably

narrower threat or mission. This capability gap is known across the Army, but the negative impact is less obvious.

To help communicate this severe challenge to their Army counterparts, CA leaders can compare and contrast the breadth of talent, technology and capital that supports the weather assessment outputs versus the civil considerations outputs in IPB or the joint intelligence preparation of the operational environment (JIPOE).¹² Not long after the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) was defeated, civilians in Mosul communicated to journalists that life was better under ISIS (due to the basic utility services they provided to the community). Coalition forces had failed to anticipate and prepare for this negative “weather system” of public civil sector sentiment.¹³

Imagine if CA had more cavalry teams, trained in CR and tactical economics, with ongoing access to an innovation base of civil sector “weather phenomena” threat experts.¹⁴ Imagine if CA could then quickly “lock and load” pre-positioned entrepreneur and venture capital “war stock” relationships to immediately partner with trusted locals to defeat those threats? Few would argue that ISIS would make for a better community partner to rebuild Mosul than the top innovators and entrepreneurs who can be found with the United States, NATO and their partners.

Innovation as a Weapon System Fills Diplomatic-Military Gaps that Irregular Warfare Adversaries Can Exploit

Investing in entrepreneurship heals division and civil sector instability. The economist Milton Friedman noted: “The great virtue of a free-market system is that it does not care what color people are; it does not care what their religion is; it only cares whether they can produce something you want to buy.... It is the most effective system we have discovered to enable people who hate one another to deal with one another and help one another.”¹⁵ Furthermore, the days of opportunistic shareholder capitalism are gradually giving way to stakeholder capitalism.



According to the World Economic Forum, stakeholder capitalism “is a form of capitalism in which companies do not only optimize short-term profits for shareholders but seek long-term value creation by taking into account the needs of all their stakeholders and society at large.”¹⁶ In just the past few years, proponents of stakeholder capitalism have created an investment niche called impact investing. This is a timely budding investment community that CA forces can leverage for the Army to help the United States stay ahead of its competitors.

As such, CA has an opportunity to guide defense-purposed impact investment funds. Friendly venture capitalists and institutional investors are increasingly looking for impact

investment opportunities around the world. Venture capital and entrepreneur support ecosystems, such as The Lion’s Den DFW in Dallas, Texas, are establishing affiliate impact investing and entrepreneur support organization (ESO) ecosystems around the world.¹⁷ CA, with its global operations, is in a prime position to help create mutually beneficial public-private partnerships with these kinds of impact investment and ESO communities.

Global Capital Market Impact Investment Funds: An Alternative to Defense Appropriations

Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors defines impact investing as investments made with the “intention to generate social or environmental impact alongside a financial return.”¹⁸ It estimates the value of the current impact investing market to be nearly \$9 trillion in the United States alone. The entire DoD budget for 2021 was roughly \$750 billion. The following quote summarizes and quantifies well the significant opportunity CA has if it starts facilitating impact investing—or, in military terms, starts facilitating Innovation as a Weapon System uses—with these funds:

As the problems societies face become more entrenched and complex, it’s clear that government and philanthropy can’t solve them on their own. A look at the amounts of capital bears this out: in the U.S., philanthropy is approximately \$390 billion, government spending is \$3.9 trillion, and capital markets (all debt and equity investments) encompass \$65 trillion. On a global scale, total investments are estimated at \$300 trillion. Thus, a 1% shift in global capital markets towards impact investing—or investments that work toward social good—could cover the estimated outstanding \$2.5 trillion annual funding gap to achieve the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As this example shows, harnessing capital markets can have a huge societal benefit.¹⁹

If the Army does not claim its share of these impact investment funds, its competitors will. Impact investment funds that CA can claim for the Army, in effect, give CA the defense appropriations it has been lacking. Impact investment funds applied through the Innovation as a Weapon System process should create a significant competitive advantage for the United States, NATO and their allied partners. The majority of these funds should be supplied and managed under the free direction of the institutional fund manager or the venture capitalists that own or control them, not the Chinese Communist Party.

In a recent forum hosted by the Oxford Department of International Development entitled “Subversive Economics: Pervasive, Dangerous, and Largely Invisible,” renowned foreign and defense policy journalist and senior fellow with the American Enterprise Institute Elisabeth Braw stated that venture capital is the “next frontier for subversive economics.”²⁰ The Chinese purchase of one of Germany’s leading robotics manufacturers and Huawei’s sponsorship of the Cambridge Science Park in England have raised this irregular warfare (IW) concern.²¹ Braw stated,

The discussion about gray-zone threats mostly focuses on easy-to-identify forms of aggression including cyber intrusions and disinformation campaigns. That’s a shame, because other forms are at least as dangerous; subversive economics, for example. While Western countries benefit from their open borders and the commerce this generates, some countries exploit that openness to strengthen their geopolitical position while weakening that of the targeted countries. It involves buying

up key companies and using venture-capital investments to access the best innovation early on.

Innovation as a Weapon System partners with global impact investors to create a counter-threat weapon system to the subversive uses of private capital.

Innovation as a Weapon System Public-Private Partnership Has Precedence

Special operations forces public-private cooperation with Spirit of America, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, is an excellent example of how the Army can immediately and legally coordinate private sector engagement without having to pay for it or formally reorganize itself to obtain congressional funding and support. Spirit of America is frequently activated and guided by U.S. special operations forces to immediately deliver private sector finished goods that support an urgent civil populace need. In one situation, in a matter of weeks, it organized the fundraising and delivery of thousands of blankets to a community in need, and, in another situation, it coordinated the supply of book bags to help a community restart school.²²

Innovation as a Weapon System follows the same model, providing the next level of civil sector security and stability support along the lines of “first give them a fish, then help them fish for themselves.” After supplying finished goods or services to an urgent civil populace need, Innovation as a Weapon System is the natural next step, supplying a populace with a process to partner with them, if they so desire, with proven entrepreneur and venture capital experts to help restore indigenous production and service capacity. Innovation as a Weapon System counters or mitigates potential IW activity that may seek to “fill the vacuum” of a struggling civilian support sector. In other words, Spirit of America provides the fish, and Innovation as a Weapon System helps the locals restore fishing for themselves—faster, if they wish.

“Innovation Accelerators” Are the Modern Civilian Method to Jump-Start Marshall Plan-Style Entrepreneurial Collaboration Where It Is Needed Most

The U.S. Army, through its cadre of 38G functional specialists and 75th Innovation Command industry experts, should activate its private sector networks to run or join innovation accelerators that support Army civil sector objectives. Priscilla Pesci, the former global managing partner and cofounder of Quake Europe of Quake Capital Partners, is the inspiration behind the Innovation as a Weapon System concept. In under a year, she effectively ran a CA operations style campaign, assembling investors, local and regional government leaders and private sector technology companies; together, they vetted over 750 global entrepreneurs, choosing to fund five of them to lead the next generation of media development in utilizing the new 5G networks being built across Germany and the world. As an American patriot, she would have gladly facilitated the Army’s participation and welcomed its future participation. There are many venture capitalists and investors like her.

As another example, imagine if 38Gs, with their 38 S/A/B (CA generalist) counterparts and the local communities and military partnerships they are supporting, had contributed to and been a part of the Gov-X innovation accelerator in South Africa in 2021 to “drive innovation towards a more digitized and cyber safe Africa.”²³ Consider the strategic CR and

IO that could have been guided and completed at that innovation accelerator in support of our African military partners and our joint efforts to thwart great-power competitor cyber security threats.

Innovation as a Weapon System: A First Draft of Its Step-By-Step Process

The following steps are a first-draft guide for collaborative refinement and testing of our model by interested parties for their own purposes. The goal of Innovation as a Weapon System is to create a flexible and adaptive procedure that requires no new additional talent, resources, funding or approval authority to execute. After a few successful trials, it might be valuable to include a best practices session as part of the Security Cooperation and Education Training Working Group (SCETWG) hosted annually by each GCC.

Step 1. Host nation (HN) senior leaders set the civil-military security, stability and prosperity objectives (SSPO) with the embassy, the GCC, the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) and other interagency strategic partners.

Step 2. The GCC-aligned CA Command (CACOM) informs its 38G leadership of these objectives in order to educate their private sector networks, and notably their appropriate venture capital sectors, to start preparing impact investment organizations and funds that may assist. CACOM 38Gs can update their IW and CR running estimates and create threat and opportunity identification guides for use by the in-country 38S/A/B CA planning teams (CAPTs).

Step 3. The CAPTs, with their HN peers and with embassy support, along with military information support teams, civil-military support elements (CMSEs) and other civil military unified action partners, formulate a joint, interorganizational and multinational (JIM)-derived security, stability, prosperity innovation opportunity (SSPIO) from their CR. They then prepare and submit an innovation partnership request (IPR) to their CACOM 38G functional specialty chief. The IPR is a form that guides applicants to “put their best foot forward” for consideration by private sector impact investment experts. It guides applicants on how to produce the information that a civil-military economic innovation partnership (CMEIP) team will need before being formed and activated.

Step 4. The CACOM functional specialty chief, perhaps aided by a mission support request (MSR) to the 75th Innovation Command Innovation Support Operations Center (ISOC), decides whether to form and activate a CMEIP. If so, a venture capital firm is selected from a preapproved list and is invited to lead the first CMEIP meeting and to lead the CMEIP team through the rest of the Innovation as a Weapon System process steps.

The venture capitalist that accepts the CMEIP team leadership role, with the help of the lead 38G and 75th Innovation Command support personnel, takes complete ownership of the SSPIO and holds a meeting with the CAPT and their HN peers to complete a CMEIP innovation accelerator ideation and preparation meeting. The Army Service component command (ASCC) G9, other supporting G9/S-9 elements and theater-level CAPTs would also likely join. At this meeting, the Army “green-suiters” help the civilian venture capital firm understand the SSPIO opportunity, constraints, risks and military objectives. The venture capital firm in turn helps the Army green suiters understand the venture capital industry’s requirements for the investment fund and the design of the innovation accelerator they intend to use.

Step 5. The venture capital lead, with the help of the CMEIP team, then builds the CMEIP innovation accelerator plan, execution schedule and the list of additional team members and stakeholders they need to bring on the CMEIP team. This will likely include needed local government and embassy contact recommendations. Trusted ESOs and additional venture capital partners, ideally locals, will be recruited to join and sponsor the event. The final innovation accelerator plan includes a risk assessment and empirical objectives for all stakeholders, as well as security and other requirements that the total CMEIP team requires. It will also include metrics and indicators for monitoring and evaluation and a monitoring plan with streamlined reporting parameters.

Step 6. After all event planning approvals have been obtained and with ground force commanders informed and in support, the CMEIP team shifts to marketing the project with the green suiter participants to possibly activate their CA, IO, public affairs office and psychological operations teams as appropriate.

Step 7. With the venture capital team leading, applicants to the CMEIP innovation accelerator are recruited and processed according to the security and vetting guidelines that the CMEIP team set. Firms like Redrock Global should be part of the CMEIP team to help vet the integrity of the participants.²⁴ To leverage previously built multinational military relationships, priority might be given to entrepreneur applicants who are military veterans who have participated in previous multinational military exercises or operations. The CMEIP innovation accelerator might also prioritize and incentivize a country's diaspora to assist.

When the launch goals of the CMEIP team are met, the venture capital lead conducts applicant training or a small conference so that applicant entrepreneurs have competition uniformity and their collective competitiveness is maximized.

Step 8. The venture capital lead and the CMEIP team then run the innovation accelerator pitch competition using modern transparent tools like ValidEval.²⁵ Competition winners receive their funding from the impact investment fund assembled.

Step 9. The winning and funded applicants from Step 8, after a period of development or post-funding operations, conduct a demo day to showcase how they have fulfilled the SSPIO objectives in the selected community of interest. All CMEIP team stakeholders invite their respective public relations staff to leverage the demo day.

Step 10. The CMEIP team, with the help of organizations such as 413 LLC,²⁶ conducts a program evaluation impact assessment to validate and report its performance against the stakeholder empirical objectives previously set and also reports back to the CAPT and ground force commander on how the CMEIP project has supported the GCC SSPIOs and lines of effort. IO should also leverage this enduring organic and friendly "living sensor."

End State. The SSPIO has been realized; an IW civil sector threat has been defeated or neutralized; and an *enduring* transnational venture capital and entrepreneur economic partnership, friendly to United States, NATO and partner interests, has been installed.

Success Requires the Army to Defend the Way of Life It Represents

The United States, NATO and their partners have had success in winning the kinetic battles of the past 20 years, but too often they refuse to defend themselves in the ideological wars they are losing. Lieutenant General Charles T. Cleveland, USA, Ret., former commanding general of the U.S. Army Special Operations Command, argues that the United States needs to defend this ideology regardless and with a counterthreat mindset. "The

Achilles' heel of our authoritarian adversaries is their inherent fear of their own people," he pointed out. "The United States must be ready to capitalize on this fear. . . . An American way of irregular war will reflect who we are as a people, our diversity, our moral code, and our undying belief in freedom."²⁷

The United States, NATO and partner entrepreneurs and their supporting venture capital communities are perhaps the best ambassadors for sharing the merits in word, deed and capital for the ideological democratic values of individual liberty, freedom and the supporting rule of law they represent. Regardless of the largess or degree of tyranny in any nation or community, entrepreneurs can always be found. They implicitly represent free and independent thinking people, and are ideal to help challenge or constrain a government or ideology that wants to infringe on individual freedom. Innovation as a Weapon System finds, empowers and enlists these entrepreneurs to help the Army and its partners win the ideological battles in IW.

Army culture knows well kinetic warfare and security cooperation. However, it needs to broaden its cultural lens and definition of "lethality" in security cooperation. China is not beating the United States with kinetic weapon capabilities. It is arguably beating the United States with its massive civil-military economic operations and investments that are taking over key civil sector nodes such as ports, land, advanced technologies, debt financing, rare earth minerals and other natural resources. Now investing seven times what the United States invested in the post-World War II Marshall Plan, China has created serious partnerships with 138 countries, with 40 on a path to becoming over-leveraged and financially subservient to China in fulfillment of its Belt and Road Initiative.²⁸ China executed this civil-military operation, secured with the legal terms and good faith of the United States, Europe and the other free-market countries that established the liberal world order—and the World Trade Organization they invited China to join.

Non-state adversaries have also learned to start winning without fighting. Some adversaries have turned traditional security cooperation efforts against the United States, NATO and their allied partners. In his excellent 2020 *Civil Affairs Issue Paper*, "A Cause of and Solution to Extremism: A Case for Civil Military Operation Capacity Building in African Partner Forces," Major James P. Micciche quantified how security cooperation efforts can create a self-defeating cycle as a "cause of *and* solution to extremism."²⁹ The recent take-over of Afghanistan by the Taliban, in a country where the United States and its allies and partners set records for security cooperation funding, calls for a broader view, definition and approach to security cooperation that offers more than just dollars and train-and-equip. The Innovation as a Weapon System public-private partnership construct is one such approach for transforming future security cooperation.

Crowdfunding and Civil Affairs

ESO crowdfunding platforms and blockchain fintech developers are the kind of leading-edge organizations for CA to leverage, institutionally as well as operationally. The CA Corps needs to scale up its list of ESO, blockchain, crypto, fintech and crowdfunding platforms that share a common mission with the Army to secure and stabilize economic freedom for disadvantaged communities around the world.³⁰ This "list" is large and growing. At the Texas Blockchain Council summit in October 2021, for example, many leaders equated Bitcoin to a means to "defend freedom with money."³¹ Blockchain decentralized digital IDs (DIDs) and other decentralized finance (DeFi) technology are means for CA to

help defend ideological freedom with tech. Consider the taglines and diversity of some of these global ESOs. Talanton LLC commits to “bring hope and transform lives by investing in values-driven, growth-stage businesses.”³² The Alta Innovation Institute, which has helped build indigenous venture capital communities in Mexico and Peru, is “disrupting poverty through innovation . . . unleashing the entrepreneurial spirit to improve the quality of life for people throughout the world.”³³ The new Fundify crowdfunding platform, serving entrepreneurs, states that it is “making it simpler to build your dream.”³⁴ Village Capital’s mission statement reads, “Entrepreneurship is a critical tool for solving the world’s biggest problems.”³⁵ Kinyungu Ventures guides investors on how to “chase outliers” to build “long-term value into the economy” through early-stage investing in Africa.³⁶ Army leaders should also consider how ESOs and these new crowdfunding organizations likely already have established local, regional and even national government support.

Critical listening skills are key for Innovation as a Weapon System success. Albert Einstein is quoted as saying, “Peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by understanding.” In his excellent and humorous TEDx presentation, “Want to Help Someone? Shut Up and Listen,” Dr. Ernesto Sirotti reinforces the importance of effective listening skills in developmental economics.³⁷ His institute trains development organizations never to initiate or try to motivate HN partners to innovate “but always respond” to their initiative. He recommends to go only where invited and to work with passionate and self-motivated people. He believes, as the authors of this paper do, that “the future of every community is in capturing its peoples’ passion, imagination, and resources.” CA embodies this ethos and can help ground commanders to listen better and to seize the passions of resident populations to win together in IW and strategic competition.

Conclusion

A guiding reference within the 2021 Civil Affairs Symposium call for issue papers, *Military Strategy in the 21st Century: People, Connectivity and Competition*, states, “In the twenty-first century, strategic advantage will emerge from how we engage with and understand people and access political, economic and social networks to achieve a position of relative advantage.” Such interactions “represent a web of networks that define power and interests in a connected world,” and those who best understand local context and “build a network around relationships harnessing local capacity” will win 21st-century competition.³⁸ Innovation as a Weapon System delivers this networked understanding, access and harnessing of local capacity.

The *Summary of the Irregular Warfare Annex to the National Defense Strategy*, in turn, points out how “Americans expect their military to do more than react to crises. They expect us to compete and maintain our advantages,” and that DoD “will apply Irregular Warfare to shape our adversaries’ behavior to our advantage, increase the cost of hostile action against the United States and its allies and pursue innovative ways to disrupt, counter, and preempt coercion and subversion.”³⁹ Innovation as a Weapon System precisely disrupts and counters civil sector threats or preempts them, gaining and maintaining positional advantage with perpetual innovation.

For the Army to achieve its 2028 vision to be ready to “deploy, fight, and win decisively against any adversary, anytime and anywhere, in a joint, multi-domain, high-intensity conflict, while simultaneously deterring others and maintaining its ability to conduct irregular warfare,”⁴⁰ it needs strategically oriented operational approaches like Innovation as a Weapon System. It is a timely solution that directly supports all three United States

National Defense Strategy lines of effort: lethality in building a more [non-kinetic] lethal force; partnerships in strengthening alliances and attracting new partners; and especially reform in changing the way we do business.⁴¹ The CA Corps can demonstrate game-changing versus incremental fulfillment of these lines of effort with Innovation as a Weapon System.

Best of all, the game-changing private sector innovation base that CA will obtain from Innovation as a Weapon System, and the implementation process described, requires no extra Army resources, funding or approvals. With the incredible success and goodwill created by the post–World War II Marshall Plan as inspiration,⁴² Innovation as a Weapon System can help lead a new generation of Army CA Soldiers to harness collective influence and goodwill. Innovation as a Weapon System represents a “ready now” opportunity for CA forces to help win IW for the United States in strategic competition, allowing the United States to reclaim its moral and material global leadership.



Major Giancarlo Newsome, son of an Italian beneficiary of the Marshall Plan, is a former Army Aviator who has held Director and VP level international sales and marketing positions for various Fortune 500 companies. Appointed a 38G Military Governance Specialist Economist/Commerce Officer in 2017, he is presently assigned to the U.S. Army Reserves 75th Innovation Command in Houston, Texas. He served a tour of duty with U.S. Army Africa, and speaks English, Italian, French, Portuguese and Spanish.

Colonel Bradford Hughes is a former Master Army Aviator with multiple combat and humanitarian relief deployments. He is an entrepreneur directing operations for an on-demand helicopter charter company serving Central Texas and is a technology transfer consultant. He is a 38G Military Government Specialist with a 6F (Transportation) skill identifier. Brad currently serves as the Functional Specialty (FxSP) Chief for the 351st Civil Affairs Command in Mountain View, California.

Lieutenant Colonel Tyson Voelkel began his career as a U.S. Army infantry officer, filling a variety of leadership and teaching roles during peacetime and combat while serving in Europe, the United States and the Middle East. He has subsequently held executive leadership roles for a multibillion dollar holding company and is presently serving as president of the Texas A&M Foundation. He currently serves in the U.S. Army Reserves as the Austin City Team leader for the 75th Innovation Command.

Notes

¹ Department of Defense, *Summary of the Irregular Warfare Annex to the National Defense Strategy*, 2020, 2.

² A-Z Quotes: www.azquotes.com/author/11404-George_S_Patton.

³ Department of State, *Military-Civil Fusion and the People's Republic of China*, 2020, <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/What-is-MCF-One-Pager.pdf>; “Made in China 2025,” Wikipedia, 14 July 2021, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Made_in_China_2025; Andrew Chatzkey and James McBride, “China’s Massive Belt and Road Initiative,” Council on Foreign Relations, 28 January 2020, <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/chinas-massive-belt-and-road-initiative>.

- ⁴ U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, *Commander's Guide to Money as a Weapon's System Handbook* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Center for Army Lessons Learned, 2009), <https://usacac.army.mil/sites/default/files/publications/09-27.pdf>.
- ⁵ Jonathan Bate and Duncan Walker, "Buying Victory: Money as a Weapon on the Battlefields of Today and Tomorrow," Modern War Institute, 3 July 2018, <https://mwi.usma.edu/buying-victory-money-weapon-battlefields-today-tomorrow/>.
- ⁶ Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-0, *Operations* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, December 2017), 1–16
- ⁷ Department of the Army, FM 3-57, *Civil Affairs Operations* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, July 2021), v.
- ⁸ Emilia Merenmies, "Building a Global Civil-Military Network," 2021 Civil Affairs Symposium, 10 November 2021, comment to authors, Zoom virtual presentation.
- ⁹ "Principles of War," Wikipedia, 22 June 2021, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Principles_of_war.
- ¹⁰ FM 3-57, 1-14, 1–4
- ¹¹ Department of the Army, FM 6-0, *Commander and Staff Organization and Operations* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, May 2014), 2–14.
- ¹² Department of the Army, Army Techniques Publication (ATP) 2-01.3/3-3, *Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield, How To Do It: The Process*, (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, March 2019), III-2, III-6; Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 2-01.3, *Developing a Systems Perspective of the Operational Environment* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 16 June 2009), Chapter 2, Item 12, II-44.
- ¹³ Rukmini Callimachi, "The ISIS Files: When Terrorists Run City Hall," *New York Times*, 5 April 2018; Chris Pleasance, "Mosul Residents Say Life Is So Hard in Bombed-Out City That They Want ISIS Back," *Daily Mail*, 29 March 2019.
- ¹⁴ "Civil Reconnaissance," FrontLine Advisory, 2016, <https://frontlineadvisory.com>; Thomas E. Ricks, "What Comes after We Retake Mosul? The Case for Using 'Tactical Economics,'" *Foreign Policy*, 15 September 2016.
- ¹⁵ Milton Friedman, "Why Government Is the Problem," Hoover Institution on War, Revolution, and Peace, Stanford University, 1 February 1993, 18.
- ¹⁶ Klaus Schwab and Peter Vanham, "What Is Stakeholder Capitalism? It's History and Relevance," *World Economic Forum*, 22 January 2021.
- ¹⁷ "The Lion's Den DFW," <https://thelionsdendfw.org>.
- ¹⁸ Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, *Impact Investing: An Introduction*, Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors Philanthropy Roadmap Series, 17 October 2017, <https://www.rockpa.org/guide/impact-investing-introduction/>.
- ¹⁹ Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, *Impact Investing: An Introduction*.
- ²⁰ Elisabeth Braw, "Subversive Economics: Pervasive, Dangerous and Largely Invisible," Oxford Department of International Development, University of Oxford, 4 May 2021, <https://www.qeh.ox.ac.uk/events/subversive-economics-pervasive-dangerous-and-largely-invisible>.
- ²¹ Nik Martin (with DPA), "German Robot Maker Kuka's CEO to Be Replaced by Chinese Owners." *DW*, 24 November 2018; Arthur Laudrain, "5G And the HUAWEI Controversy: Is It about More than Just Security?" *BBC Science Focus Magazine*, 21 March 2020; Ryan Morgan, "UK Allowing China's Huawei to Build \$1.2 Billion Factory despite US Security Concerns," *American Military News*, 25 June 2020.
- ²² Spirit of America, "Support US Military Efforts to Provide Winter Supplies to Displaced Families in Northeast Syria," February 2021, <https://spiritofamerica.org/project/support-us-military-efforts-to-provide-winter-supplies-to-displaced-families-in-northeast-syria>; Spirit of America, "Building Friendship and Partnership Through Education," December 2020, <https://spiritofamerica.org/project/building-friendship-through-education>.
- ²³ University of the Western Cape, Samsung Future-Innovation Lab, "Gov-X Innovation Challenge," 2021, <https://govxinnovationchallenge.com>.
- ²⁴ Red Rock Global Security Group, "Global Investigations and Open Source Intelligence," <https://www.redrockgsg.com>.
- ²⁵ Valid Eval, "Complexity, Simplified," valideval.com.

- ²⁶ 413, www.413.works.
- ²⁷ Robert S. Burrell, “How to Integrate Competition and Irregular Warfare,” Modern War Institute, 5 August 2021, <https://mwi.usma.edu/how-to-integrate-competition-and-irregular-warfare>.
- ²⁸ Brandon J. Archuleta, “China’s Belt & Road Initiative, Lending Practices, Overseas Access and Basing,” *351 CACOM 38G Military Government Specialists 6C Finance and 6E Commerce Interagency in the Pacific Briefings*.
- ²⁹ James P. Micciche, “A Cause of and Solution to Extremism: A Case for Civil Military Operation (CMO) Capacity Building in African Partner Forces,” *Small Wars Journal*, 13 January 2020.
- ³⁰ Crowdfund Capital Advisors, “CCA’s World Bank Research Report: Crowdfunding’s Potential for the Developing World,” 11 November 2013, <https://crowdfundcapitaladvisors.com/research/>.
- ³¹ Texas Blockchain Council, “Policy Initiatives,” 3 September 2021, <https://texasblockchaincouncil.org/policy-page>.
- ³² Talanton LLC, <https://www.talantonllc.com>.
- ³³ Alta Innovation Institute, <https://www.altainnovation.com>.
- ³⁴ “About Us,” Fundify, 2021, <https://www.fundify.com/about>.
- ³⁵ “Our Mission,” Village Capital, 2019, <https://vilcap.com/about-us/our-mission>.
- ³⁶ Tayo Akinyemi, Osarumen Osamuyi and Tony Chen, “Chasing Outliers: Why Context Matters for Early-Stage Investing in Africa,” *Query Insights and the Subtext*, January 2021, <https://kinyungu.com/chasing-outliers/>.
- ³⁷ Ernesto Sirolli, “Want to Help Someone? Shut Up and Listen!” TED, September 2012, https://www.ted.com/talks/ernesto_sirolli_want_to_help_someone_shut_up_and_listen.
- ³⁸ Charles Cleveland, Benjamin Jensen, Susan Bryant and Arnel David, *Military Strategy in the 21st Century: People, Connectivity, and Competition* (Amherst, NY: Cambria Press, 2018).
- ³⁹ Department of Defense, *Irregular Warfare Annex to the National Defense Strategy*—Summary, 2020, 7.
- ⁴⁰ “The Army’s Vision and Strategy: The United States Army,” U.S. Army, <https://www.army.mil/about/>.
- ⁴¹ Department of Defense, *Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy of the United States of America*, 2018, 5, <https://dod.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/2018-National-Defense-Strategy-Summary.pdf>.
- ⁴² Peter J. Duignan and Lewis H. Gann, “The Marshall Plan,” Hoover Institution, 30 October 1997, <https://hoover.org/research/marshall-plan>.

Maximum Support, Flexible Footprint: The Need for Civilian Applied Research Laboratories to Support the 38G Program

by Dr. Hayden Bassett & Lieutenant Kate Harrell, USNR

Introduction

The U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (Airborne), or USACAPOC(A), Military Government Specialist (38G) program was established with the mission of supporting the six core competencies of USACAPOC by “provid[ing] CA the capability to conduct responsibilities normally performed by civil governments and emergency services organizations.”¹ By actively recruiting civilian subject matter experts (SMEs) across 38G’s 18 skill identifiers, the U.S. Army Reserve (USAR) is decidedly shaping 38G as a force of civil sector professionals, each with their own professional networks, to position its Soldier-scholars to contribute uniquely to strategic competition. These 18 skill identifiers encompass the range of civil sectors needed to “fill key planning, operations, and liaison roles” in matters of security, justice and reconciliation, humanitarian assistance and social well-being, governance and participation and economic stabilization and infrastructure.² Exploiting the full potential of these experts, including their academic and professional networks, will be a major strategic focus of building out the 38G program in coming years. As adversaries develop capabilities well beyond the scope of conventional military domains, the expertise commanded by the 38G program will increasingly represent a major strategic asset. The focus of 38G activities has generally been viewed as reactionary and focused on post-conflict governance and response. Yet with “the increasing inseparability of civilian and military spheres,”³ a sustained effort on data production, analysis and monitoring in the respective fields of 38G will be required to counter malign influence and other gray-zone activity in civil society. This paper advances a civil-military solution to the evolving operational environment in the form of applied research labs, housed within partnered institutions to support the range of skill identifiers within 38G.

38G and the Current Operational Environment

Recent calls “to expand the battlefield beyond physical domains to cognitive capacities” have highlighted the need to confront the proliferation of gray-zone activities that subvert current capabilities.⁴ By design, the front lines of gray-zone conflict permeate well behind conventional lines of military forces. The gray-zone operational environment is often thematic, trans-geographic and dynamic, as opposed to mapped onto a localized terrain. Operations in this space target and shape ideas, ideology and geographically disconnected actors in civil society so as to disadvantage and disrupt from within targeted institutions. The extent to which gray-zone activities have penetrated civilian sectors can only be extrapolated from the types of gray-zone activity identified to date. This is particularly true for campaigns that seek to influence, divide or erode perceptions on seemingly non-military issues within the information warfare domain. These malign operations have targeted culture,

education, public infrastructure, transportation issues, criminal justice, agriculture, cultural heritage and many of the other specialties present among 38G officers.⁵

Countering these malign influences begins with identification. This requires civil reconnaissance (CR), defined as the “targeted, planned, and coordinated observation and evaluation of specific civil aspects of the environment for collecting civil information to enhance situational understanding and facilitate decision making.”⁶ At present, however, CR is closely tied to Cartesian conceptions of operational environments, and gray-zone threats live in networked spaces rather than strictly geographic ones. As opposed to reconnaissance tied to geographic space, CR in gray-zone conflict occurs through continuous monitoring for malign activity, influence campaigns, information warfare and other state and non-state actions by those equipped to recognize these actions. Operations in this space are, by design, sustained and ever emergent. Reconnaissance that defines and communicates the operational environment must therefore occur on a sustained basis and across civil subject matter. As recently noted by a Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) report, “Warning in the gray zone means identifying and assessing new patterns throughout new sources of data.”⁷ Given their subject matter expertise, 38G officers are well equipped to do the identification, monitoring and reporting of gray-zone activities targeting civil society.

The workflow of the 38G cadre should be shaped to address this environment, and roadblocks to success should be examined now. The scholars selected for 38G positions are likely to suppose that, because they were selected on account of their civilian expertise, their duties in their military position mirror their civilian work environment. These work environments range from pure academic research to strictly applied engagements. While the mission that 38G officers support will almost exclusively operate in applied settings, the question here is how the 38G program might take advantage of the research capacity, creative problem solving, resourcing and innovation present in academia.

Civilian academics and research institutions typically position themselves as specialists working within a narrow research focus within the already highly restricted parameters of their own discipline. This has both advantages and disadvantages in engaging in civil-military support. Chief among the advantages is the depth of subject matter expertise and the breadth of regionally or technically relevant professional networks. By design, recruitment of civilian specialists positions the 38G program as a set of turnkey professional networks that will become increasingly necessary to engage as all-of-society threats penetrate civil sectors in years to come. Second to this is the room for experimentation, innovation and failure that exists in civilian research institutions but does not typically exist in military settings. Third, and arguably most important, is resourcing. Academic departments and other civilian research entities are resourced by parent institutions and/or their own fundraising to develop their own research agenda. Applied research, as a driver of funding from grants, fundraising, services rendered and in-kind support, may drive civil-military engagements so long as those engagements retain research value in academic settings.

While these three affordances of academic partnerships provide solutions to many of the primary concerns in supporting new efforts, several obstacles must also be overcome. The recruitment of civilian experts to fill skill identifiers is putting together, as colleagues, scholars who are generally unfamiliar with working alongside people from such a range of backgrounds. The closest model academics have for military hierarchy is that of the academic department, and it is likely that 38G officers will bring this frame of reference with them to their military position. Left unchecked, a 38G subspeciality becomes the

new “department” in which individual experts cover a wide swath of research areas. The specialties together form the “college,” with each specialty packaged as an individual intelligence stream, or “brain silo.” The effect of these streams in a military context is to create a unidirectional flow of information, with synthesis occurring only at the highest levels or pushed outside the 38G cadre completely. By treating themselves as repositories of information, combined with 38G officers’ tendencies to only collaborate within their own disciplines, the result will be a stovepipe structure that further isolates the functional areas away from one another and excludes synthetic analysis.

All of these issues become heightened against the backdrop of the typical reserve battle assembly model of one weekend a month, two weeks a year. The 2021 Army Chief of Staff white paper on competition rightfully notes: “In an era of limited resources, the Army must maximize capabilities, activities, and investments that contribute to the multiple dynamics of competition (narrative, direct, and indirect) and that have tactical, operational, and strategic benefits.”⁸ While this era of limited resources persists, the military scope must continue to expand to effectively identify and counter the range of activities deployed by foreign actors beneath the threshold of war. The brief windows of reserve battle assembly do not afford enough time to provide the sheer amount of open-source monitoring or to facilitate building collaborative links across the functional specialties. We predict that the types of missions that the 38G officers will be called on to support—from humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) to military exercises—will require collaboration, not just swaths of data. Integration across the specialties will be essential. When measured against the challenge of the gray-zone threat, it is evident that the model of 38G must be tailored to fight the next war, not the last one. To successfully compete in civilian sectors now targeted by malign operations, the Army must build from early 38G successes and continue to develop civilian partnerships, maximizing the combined federal and public civilian institutional resources in these sectors. The ideal model of sustained support is the applied research lab, housed within partner academic institutions.

38G Officers in the Civilian Applied Research Lab

Three areas in which civil affairs (CA) could benefit from applied research to counter the growing threat by means of civil-military partnerships are data production, data analysis and sustained monitoring. As previously mentioned, the necessary starting place for these activities is identification of foreign influence in any given civil sector. As most elements of competition involve a narrative component,⁹ gray-zone activities defining the new operational environment are commonly found in open-source digital media that leverage connectivity, collective perception and rapid dissemination. While cyber specialists represent a critical military force, the main point to underscore is that mastery of the civilian subject matter is just as necessary as proficiency in the medium of influence.

The sustained form of CR outlined in this paper would be best implemented as a form of digital CR. A recent CA issue paper defines digital civil reconnaissance (DCR) as “a method of capitalizing on existing open-source information without a physical presence in the battlespace or specialized equipment to remotely conducting CR.”¹⁰ DCR of gray-zone activity is a continuation into the military domain of what many 38G officers are already researching in their civilian roles. This is because the information is unclassified and available on the open source. DCR research and analysis can thus be performed from any DoD, remote or partnered civilian research location, and with any personal computing device, not just NMCI (Navy/Marine Corps Intranet) PCs.

Though well-established in DoD research and development activities, the concept of the applied research lab is now emerging as a critical institution in academic and non-governmental organizations to bridge pure research and real-world application. With respect to CA, and 38G in particular, the development of applied research labs within institutional partners fills a significant gap highlighted in the first part of this paper. As civil sectors increasingly take on strategic importance as the means for engaging with allied partners and gray-zone activities penetrate civilian domains, there is a critical need for data production, analysis, sustained monitoring and information synthesis in order to support an observe, orient, decide, act (OODA) loop for informed decisionmaking. Information synthesis at the *observe* and *orient* stages is critical for allowing CA officers to populate the new operational environment (OE) (both geographic and networked) by recognizing malign activity in their respective fields, which in turn allows for the progression to the *decide* and *act* stages against these influences.

The 38G program is currently building strategic relationships with institutional and academic partners, and it is within these networks that we suggest establishing applied research labs across the range of 38G specialties. Labs should be placed within partners that are equipped to provide the workforce, equipment and training needed to support the mission long term. At its most basic level, the applied research lab requires little in the way of materiel footprint or initial outlay. The most useful implement may be the common access card, which scholars can use to leverage the combined in-kind resources of the federal government and their academic institutions. Whereas the former maintains access to satellite imagery, data and a network of turnkey interagency capabilities, the latter often holds more conventional research resources and flexibility in time and effort that U.S. government entities lack. Leveraging existing resources on both sides of the partnership enables applied research lab staffers to conduct research, generate critical data, collaborate and iterate more efficiently. This means the applied research lab model is scalable to fit the number of staff and CA personnel who are available to work within it.

The guidance of CA officers within the applied research lab is critical to aligning the military mission with civilian workflow. As scholar-practitioners, CA officers will be implementing data, information and approaches developed in an applied research lab setting while operating downrange. Because these research activities must be developed with implementation in mind, direct involvement of CA officers in the research process ensures that the demands of praxis are continually met. One practical way to align military and civilian affairs is to identify opportunities of mutual interest between academic research foci and CA lines of effort (LoEs). LoEs are used at the various levels of USACAPOC(A) command structure to define strategic and operational objectives. The 38G program itself is an LoE (LoE 4: Innovation),¹¹ while the 38G/6V program has developed its own internal LoEs to develop unit doctrine and offer operational support.¹² These operational LoEs, in particular, should be applied as guidelines for how CA officers can bring civilian research areas together with commanders' intent within the applied research lab space. Consistent alignment with the relevant LoEs will ensure the sustainability of the time and resources required to develop data, information and support from both the civilian and military sectors.

The benefits of applied research labs go beyond maximizing available resources. These labs offer flexibility in various ways, particularly in low-stakes environments or on an ad hoc basis, that military planning cannot. Much of military planning requires vast sums of time, money and effort, so the bar for success—and the price of failure—are both high. The

length of time that most military planning requires means that, by the time the planning is implemented, many of its outcomes are backward looking. The result is often single solutions—which themselves are compromises of affordability, logistics and time—that are applied, rubber-stamp model, to a vast array of situations.

In applied research labs, by contrast, continual testing of models and workflows allows for regular feedback, assessment and evolution. Their fluid workflow allows for a forward-focused mindset. Solutions that spring from these environments are low cost, immediate, tailored to the specific problem at hand and can be shaped or adapted as the problem itself changes. The applied research lab should also be innovating extensive collaboration among the labs themselves to facilitate interdisciplinary networking and to support the different 38G functional specialties. In this respect, applied labs across skill identifiers might host an annual conference and develop a formal publication venue, both to establish their own scholarship and to create a record of successes, failures and lessons learned. In addition to being beneficial in their own right, these regular products will create the expectation that collaboration is a core mission of the 38G subspecialties.

Applied Research and the CA Officer of the Future

In 2021, and continuing into 2022, the scope of 38G capabilities is still being realized. In an era of rapid change, the current generation of 38G officers will be learning how to do the job while on the job. We presume that the more experience 38G officers have in implementing layered solutions that meet the interests of the different functional 38G specialties, the more effective they will be in this role. Yet, what of the threats 15 years from now? How can we begin preparing a new CA workforce for “the Multi-Domain Army of 2035”?¹³ The current vision for this force is to build “Army formations and capabilities [that] will provide the necessary speed, both physical and cognitive, to achieve decision dominance required for a faster-paced, distributed, and complex operating environment.”¹⁴ The most impactful reason for building civilian partnerships to sustain 38G is to start forging the next generation of 38G officers. The fact is, the 38G officer of 2035—officers who are used to working collaboratively with a large civil-military network of researchers within a solutions-oriented framework—must become a reality much sooner than that.

A workspace outside the military environment will allow 38G officers to bring in students from various academic disciplines in order to train those who will fill these roles for the Multi-Domain Army of 2035. At a minimum, training in applied research labs would include:

1. Familiarity with foundational military doctrine, international governance and ethical guidelines and disaster relief measures of the specific functional specialty.
2. Building extensive analytic skills. Students would learn how to frame research questions toward applied ends, develop methods for answering those questions, extract data from those methods, adjust methods as needed, assess that data and then begin the process again based on the outcomes.
3. Exposure to conducting open-source research and evaluating internet information against the backdrop of malign actor misinformation and a denial-and-deception environment. This experience is unlike what students encounter in typical college classes, where they are expected to find verifiable information deposited in open, shared forums.

4. Broadening their writing and presentation skills for a government and/or military audience instead of an academic audience.
5. Career mentorship for future positions within 38G. Exposure to a service-oriented profession will heighten the attraction of military service.

Exposing students to the scope of 38G capabilities before they become junior officers is critical to the long-term success of the program. With a worldwide OE and mission that requires standing a continual watch, officers simply do not have enough time during battle assembly to learn how to do the job while on the job. Furthermore, we want to avoid peaks of progression followed by troughs of stagnation during generational turnover within the 38G cadre. Applied research labs should be preparing young officers to be mission ready from their first day in uniform. The minimum requirements for the newly commissioned 38G officers of 2035 should be excellence in their civilian careers and prior experience supporting the 38G mission set.

Case Study: The Cultural Heritage Monitoring Lab

This concept of an applied research lab housed within an institutional partner is currently being piloted within 38G/6V (Heritage and Preservation). The Cultural Heritage Monitoring Lab (CHML) at the Virginia Museum of Natural History has partnered with the Smithsonian Cultural Rescue Initiative (SCRI), the institutional partner of 38G/6V.¹⁵ To date, civilian SMEs in this support lab have invested in:

- Satellite imagery monitoring and analysis of cultural heritage due to conflict and natural disaster. These products are briefed to the Department of State (DoS) and DoD.
- Geospatial data production that directly feeds into the Commercial Civil Affairs Solution-Army (CCAS-A) database.¹⁶
- Methodological development, including predictive analysis of impacts to cultural heritage.
- Identification of malign actor narrative/disinformation operations involving cultural heritage. This research is currently ongoing, scheduled to be briefed to DoD.
- Rapid analysis of impacts following natural disasters to guide ground response teams. These products have been provided directly to response teams.
- Development of real-time SME reach-back capabilities for CA units during an exchange with a foreign partner via satellite communications.¹⁷ CHML provided five days of continuous support, including during field surveys in the Honduran jungle.
- Identification of the legal context of actions involving cultural heritage by state and non-state actors. These case studies have been briefed to stakeholders.
- Training undergraduate and graduate student interns through the DoS Virtual Student Federal Service internship program,¹⁸ in accordance with the principles outlined in the previous section.

In August 2021, CHML activated its civilian members to respond to an HADR event. On Saturday, 14 August, a 7.2 magnitude earthquake struck the island of Haiti, heavily impacting a number of coastal areas, notably the town of Les Cayes. On Sunday, 15 August, CHML members worked with NASA Jet Propulsion Lab (JPL) staff to acquire synthetic aperture radar (SAR) imagery of the island from before and after the earthquake. CHML

staff then overlaid the NASA product on top of an in-house developed geospatial (ArcGIS) inventory of cultural property in Haiti to model the earthquake's likely impacts to the island's cultural heritage.

By 17 August, the results—18 maps, scaled to the city block—were delivered to Haitian partner SMEs. In order to maximize support for the field teams, the maps were stand-alone products that were decidedly low tech; they would not require GPS or any additional technology. Every street and monument was labeled so that field surveyors could orient themselves even if street signs or landmarks had been destroyed. The ground teams used these maps to perform impact assessments on over 50 sites and monuments during a city survey that took place starting on 21 August. The comprehensive findings of the ground assessment teams were subsequently delivered back to CHML, which served as an effective ground truth for the lab's modeling. Without the civilian network of SCRI and CHML's DCR, ground teams would have had to create the list of damaged sites and buildings on foot, a dangerous and time-consuming operation in the circumstances.

This form of rapid response leveraged almost every capability that CHML has developed to support 38G/6V. In the future, we envision coordination with other applied research labs to build integrated products so that other types of infrastructure—schools, utilities, government buildings—could be similarly surveyed by the same ground teams, building a more holistic picture of the operating environment from the ground up. As direct support provided to SCRI, the 38G/6V institutional partner, this response to Haiti served as a demonstration of the applied research lab's abilities and response time that we foresee for future CA operations.

Conclusion: Successful 38G Officers Are Grounded in Applied Research Labs

This paper has outlined the necessity of sustained research, data production, civil sector monitoring and methodological innovation to support and empower 38G officers. The solution presented here—applied research labs housed within civilian institutional partnerships—will be familiar to longstanding research and development activities within DoD. Existing institutional partners currently provide 38G officers with an established professional network, opportunities for training and strategic-level research in their respective civil sectors. Yet within these partnerships, a more intensive focus on the sustained data production, information synthesis and activity monitoring can be accomplished through applied research labs housed within these institutions.

The applied research lab supporting CA efforts fills a gap that currently exists in force structure and time. As noted in the recently updated FM 3-57, “The OE includes a wide variety of intangible factors, such as the culture, perceptions, beliefs, and values of adversary, enemy, neutral, or friendly political and social systems. These factors must be analyzed and *continuously assessed throughout the operations process* to develop a situational understanding of the environment.”¹⁹ Confronted with a new and ever-changing OE, the data and information production demands that will be placed on 38G officers cannot be solely fulfilled through battle assembly. The gains from implementation of these applied components of civil-military partnerships will not only be realized in identifying the evolving threat environment but in streamlining the tasks of 38G officers. This will allow them to dedicate their limited time to implementation of data and findings rather than both production and implementation. The operating focus of the applied research labs should be guided

by CA officers with reference to current LoEs established by the various command levels of USACAPOC(A). The battle rhythm within the lab, in terms of meeting the operational focus, should be an outgrowth of the freedom and flexibility afforded to civilian academics, who will use the lab to further their own research and as a teaching space, shaping the next generation of 38G officers.

It should be clear that the benefits of civilian applied research labs supporting the 38G specialties can be reaped both now and in the future. The long-term strategic success of CA activities in an increasingly civilian operating environment may in large part depend on their implementation.



Dr. Hayden Bassett is the Archaeology Curator at the Virginia Museum of Natural History, where he also directs the Cultural Heritage Monitoring Lab (CHML). CHML is partnered with the Smithsonian Cultural Rescue Initiative, the institutional partner of the Army Monuments Officers (38G/6V). Previously, he served as a civilian archaeologist for the DoD, where he directed archaeological fieldwork and cultural property protection in East Africa, the Middle East, southern Europe and throughout the United States.

Lieutenant Kate Harrell served six and a half years of active duty as a Navy Intelligence Officer before moving into the Navy Reserve. She currently drills with Navy History and Heritage Command and serves as the Army Monuments Officers (38G/6V) Team Lead for Line of Effort 4. She is a Senior Research Associate at the Cultural Heritage Monitoring Lab.

Notes

- ¹ U.S. Army Reserve, *Civil Affairs Branch*, Careers Document, 1 June 2017, <https://www.usar.army.mil/Portals/98/Documents/ARCD/DA%20PAM%20600-3s/CA%20Branch%20DA%20Pam%20600-3.pdf?ver=2018-07-10-185031-497>.
- ² Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-57, *Civil Affairs Operations* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2019), II-11–II-16.
- ³ David Carment and Dani Belo, “Gray-Zone Conflict Management: Theory, Evidence, and Challenges,” *Air Force Journal of European, Middle Eastern, & African Affairs*, 2020, <https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/JEMEAA/Display/Article/2213954/gray-zone-conflict-management-theory-evidence-and-challenges/>.
- ⁴ Christopher Holshek, *Expanding Multi-Domain Operations to Win Moral Competition*, Association of the United States Army, 19 August 2020.
- ⁵ Christopher Holshek (ed.), *Civil Affairs: A Force for Influence in Competition: Civil Affairs Issue Papers, Vol. 7, 2020–2021* (Arlington, VA: AUSA, 2021).
- ⁶ FM 3-57, 1–3.
- ⁷ Lindsey Sheppard and Matthew Conklin, “Case Study: Warning for the Gray Zone,” in *By Other Means Part II: Adapting to Compete in the Gray Zone*, Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) report, 2019, 60.
- ⁸ Department of the Army, *The Army in Military Competition*, Chief of Staff of the Army Paper, no. 2 (2021): vii.
- ⁹ Department of the Army, *The Army in Military Competition*, 8–10.
- ¹⁰ Paul J. Hendrick, Edward B. Lescher and Matthew T. Peterson, “Digital Civil Reconnaissance,” *Eunomia Journal* (2020), <https://www.civilaffairsassoc.org/post/digital-civ-recon>.

- ¹¹ Christopher Holshek, Colonel, USA, Ret., “2019 Civil Affairs Symposium Report,” *Civil Affairs Issue Papers*, Vol. 7, 2020–2021, 11–12.
- ¹² Michael Delacruz, “38G/6V Heritage Preservation Officer Cadre Collaboration Workplan (4Q FY20–2Q FY21),” 2020.
- ¹³ Department of the Army, *Army Multi-Domain Transformation: Ready to Win in Competition and Conflict*, Chief of Staff of the Army Paper, no. 1 (2021): 1.
- ¹⁴ Department of the Army, *Army Multi-Domain Transformation*, 1.
- ¹⁵ “Cultural Heritage Monitoring Lab,” Virginia Museum of Natural History, <https://www.vmnh.net/research-collections/chml>.
- ¹⁶ “The Commercial Civil Affairs Solution-Army (CCAS-A),” ArcGIS StoryMaps, 7 February 2020, <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/83beed80981b447080d048244cf43f3a>.
- ¹⁷ “U.S., Honduran Military, and Cultural Heritage Experts Partner for Unique Exchange,” DVIDS, <https://www.dvidshub.net/image/6809459/us-honduran-military-and-cultural-heritage-experts-partner-unique-exchange>.
- ¹⁸ “Virtual Student Federal Service,” U.S. Department of State, <https://vsfs.state.gov/>.
- ¹⁹ FM 3-57, 3–13. Emphasis added by authors.

Individualism versus Collectivism: Civil Affairs and the Clash of National Strategic Cultures

by Colonel Marco A. Bongioanni, USA

If individualism represents the accepted ideology in most Western countries today, then governments as well as militaries should embrace it by investing in such individualist motivations.

Gabriel Ben-Dor¹

In the world of strategic affairs, culture matters immensely.² Strategic culture is a model often used in strategic studies to explain how culture affects the behaviors and decisions that leaders and states make. Strategic culture can therefore be an important analytical tool to help us better understand both international relations and the motivations behind a state's actions.³ While great-power competition has arguably always been present, its recent reemergence has brought a new interest in strategic culture. Nations and their leaders drive strategic affairs, but societies are the true representatives of culture. At the root of the differences between cultures is a fundamental issue in human societies: the role of the individual versus the role of the group.⁴ If one accepts that societies either fall into individualist or collectivist categories and that these in turn drive a particular strategic cultural profile, then strategic leaders could leverage the strengths and opportunities of their particular societal orientation.

Civil affairs' (CA's) ability to build extended civil-military networks may be the answer to providing a global framework for how U.S. strategic culture can best be optimized. This network will ideally leverage some sort of strategic asymmetry nested in the differences between individualism and collectivism in order to gain positional advantage over near-peer threats.⁵

We can see the necessity to optimize a national security strategic culture model rooted in U.S. individualism while also accounting for the collectivism differences of our near-peer competitors. We can do this by examining the significant differences between individualism and collectivism in identifying their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). We can then propose three doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, facilities and policy (DOTMLPF-P) recommendations for how U.S. strategic and CA leaders can create a global civil-military network leveraging our nation's cultural strengths.

Overview of Strategic Culture

A standard definition of strategic culture has proven elusive.⁶ The term, in a modern sense, was coined by Jack Snyder, who in 1977 brought the political cultural argument into modern securities studies as a theory for interpreting Soviet nuclear strategy.⁷ Central to strategic culture theory is the argument that decisionmaking is not an abstract concept but rather is highly intertwined in the collective values, ideas, beliefs and biases of a nation's

elites and civil society.⁸ However, with the end of the Cold War and the lack of a clear peer competitor for the United States, strategic culture as a concept began to fall out of favor.

We need to look to sociology for two key terms in this analysis of U.S. strategic culture profile: individualism and collectivism. Put simply, individualism is used to describe those who are more independent, while collectivism often refers to people who are more receptive to group influence or culture. In order to identify where we can gain positional advantage against a competitor, we need to first identify a good individualism versus collectivism measurement and assessment tool.

Hofstede’s Cultural Dimension Assessment Tools

In the 1980s, Geert Hofstede’s pioneering work helped develop a cultural difference construct and assessment measuring tool to explain how Asia’s economy outperformed the economy of the United States and Europe, based on stark differences in four dimensions: power and distance; uncertainty and avoidance; individualism and collectivism; and masculinity and femininity.⁹ Hofstede’s research helped to develop one of the earliest and most popular frameworks for measuring cultural dimensions in a global perspective. What he found were key differences among 74 different cultures.¹⁰ Of interest for this analysis, the United States scored vastly differently from two of our current great-power competitors, China and Russia, in individualism over collectivism. Figure 1 demonstrates this.

Figure 1

Russia-China-United States Result Comparison of Hofstede’s Dimensions¹¹

Dimension	Russia		China		United States	
	Score	Rank*	Score	Rank*	Score	Rank*
Individualism over collectivism	39	39–40	20	56–61	91	1

* Rank out of 74 countries

What is most important about Hofstede’s work is that he showed that cultural differences can be measured indirectly through asking well-designed assessment questions about people’s values and beliefs. This means that the results can then be interpreted to tell us something about a society and, potentially, about the positional advantages or disadvantages of its strategic culture. Hofstede’s work inspired thousands of empirical studies to further test his construct of cultural value dimensions. Significant meta-analysis reviews have also been done with these supporting studies that continue to show that his work adds value to cross-cultural, organizational behavior and psychology literature.¹² These and other extensive peer-reviewed studies helped to further validate his methods of assessment.

Overview of Collectivism

The vast majority of people in our world live in societies where the interests of the group prevail over the interests of individuals.¹³ These are commonly known as collectivist cultures, which can be seen as “we” based, frequently focused on placing the group’s goals ahead of personal goals and where success is measured by group achievement. Societies in collectivist cultures are integrated into strong cohesive groups, often with their extended families, tribes, etc., and they continue to protect one another in exchange for unquestioned loyalty.¹⁴ In experimental situations, collectivists have demonstrated more cooperative and

less competitive behaviors than individualists.¹⁵ This collective agency has a deep-rooted tradition in which the obligations of individuals are to the larger society and help guide the ethical conduct of the collective.¹⁶ Collectivist cultures also create sharper distinctions between groups centered around shared values—and the people outside those groups who do not share those values.¹⁷ People in the group(s) will be less accepting of risk but more likely to be comfortable with surprise.¹⁸ Finally, collectivists tend to be less comfortable with direct confrontations than individualists.¹⁹ Collectivist cultures have been overwhelmingly more representative in societies throughout history.

Overview of Individualism

In an individualist society, the ties among individuals are loose. Its members are expected to look after themselves and possibly their immediate families. People can move around as individuals, and incentives are provided for individuals.²⁰ Individualism in a cultural sense can be seen as an “I” based culture that is full of frequently fluid environments, with an emphasis on individual achievement and self-reliance, and where success is measured by individual achievement. There is an emphasis on autonomy, independence, individual initiative, the right to privacy and the pursuit of happiness and financial security.²¹

At the core of individualism is also the idea that others are deserving of as much recognition and respect as oneself since there is an inherent equality of all individuals beneath the surface that makes every person equally worthy.²² Individualism in modern society frequently brings with it a capitalist economic system that champions the free market, commercialization, competition, personal consumption and values that centralize individuals having their personal needs and desires met by consumerism.²³ Modern Western individualist capitalist civilization is dominated by personal agency.²⁴ Western societies tend to celebrate and reward risk-taking but are less likely to be comfortable with surprise.²⁵

How Individualist and Collectivist Cultures View Each Other

In the eyes of our strategic rivals Russia and China, U.S. strategic culture is characterized as warlike, offensive-minded, expansionist, maritime and materialistic.²⁶ They frequently see U.S. strategic culture and American life as culturally dependent on advanced technology.²⁷ Interestingly, the Chinese in particular have their own definition for individual liberty that is often seen simply as harmony.²⁸ Further, the Chinese language does not have an equivalent word for the term *personality*, which is often championed as how we define ourselves as individuals in the West.²⁹

Western individualist society has very different views from collective societies on social decisionmaking, independent versus interdependent self-concepts, analytic versus holistic reasoning, and moral reasoning.³⁰ In the camp of individualism, we are often the most extreme representation. Due to the success of its society, Americans have developed an innate belief in the superiority of their sociopolitical and economic ideas.³¹ American respect for the due process of law, adherence to the law of armed conflict and a desire to minimize collateral damage in warfare go along with an individualist propensity to want to play by the rules so everybody gets a fair shot.³² We therefore often see those who fail to respect international norms as contrary to American values and individualism. Most Americans are less likely to openly criticize other cultures and would likely see collectivist societies more with a sense of ambivalence or apathy.

Use of the SWOT Model to Examine Individualism and Collectivism

A SWOT analysis is a strategic balance sheet for an organization.³³ It can be a simple and helpful tool to identify optimization points in order to gain positional advantage over a rival. Likely developed by Albert Humphrey in the 1960s and 1970s through the Stanford Research Institute, it has been used to gather data from Fortune 500 companies for decades and is a well-respected and tested measurement tool.³⁴ Ultimately, the SWOT analysis tool provides an easy way to compare and contrast both collectivism and individualism in order to identify what strategic cultural advantages the United States may have.

Why CA Matters in the Discussion of Individualism versus Collectivism

As noted initially, in the world of strategic affairs, culture matters immensely.³⁵ The importance of culture and strategic-level engagement in CA operations is also significant. “Culture” appears 17 times while “strategic” is mentioned 56 times in Field Manual 3-57, *Civil Affairs Operations*. It is commonly known that CA forces are expected to be experts in regional and cultural competencies in order to allow them to interact successfully with the variety of cultures present in the local populace and so provide their commander with the best situational understanding of the operational environment (OE). “Greater situational understanding of culture and civil considerations also identifies the risks to U.S. forces and the overall military campaign in the civil component of the OE, thereby ensuring the commander is able to make more timely and informed decisions.”³⁶

We have seen that since we can effectively measure individualism versus collectivism and identify the strengths of the U.S. strategic cultural profile, steps need to be taken now to gain a positional advantage on our collectivist rivals. CA is the optimal partner to leverage the strengths of the U.S. individualist cultural profile via its extended civil-military networks. CA knowledge of civil component factors and how they can impact strategic decisionmaking particularly makes them important in the clash of national strategic cultures.

Recommendations for How U.S. Strategic and CA Leaders Can Leverage Individualism

Based on the SWOT analysis, there are three key DOTMLPF-P recommendations we can make for how strategic planners and CA leaders can better optimize individualism as a component of U.S. strategic culture.

Leadership and Education: Institutionalize Cross-Cultural Competence to Counter Russian and Chinese Collectivism

The SWOT analysis clearly shows that a strength of individualism is that it generally creates an environment, often with its own challenges, that encourages cross-cultural appreciation and recognizing diversity. “The need for cross-cultural competence has only increased as the strategic environment becomes more complex.”³⁷ Steps should be taken to ensure that strategic planners and CA leaders can become more psychologically astute by educating themselves in the realm of psychologists, cultural psychologists and anthropologists.³⁸ This also means education in identifying the key differences between individualism versus collectivism. Institutions that train strategic leaders, such as the service colleges, should expand lessons on how culture and cognitions impact the decisionmaking process.³⁹

Figure 2
Collectivism: SWOT* Analysis

INTERNAL									
POSITIVE	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">Strengths</th> <th style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">Weaknesses</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Most prevalent societal organization with a focus on cooperation 2. Comfort with uncertainty and surprise 3. Thrift 4. Persistence and perseverance 5. Importance placed on the practice of virtue without as much concern for the truth </td> <td> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Belief in cultural superiority 2. "Spiral of Silence" due to groups' influence on individual behavior 3. Difficulty in accepting risk and confrontation 4. Ordering relationships by status and strictly observing this order 5. More prevalent in autocratic government systems </td> </tr> <tr> <th style="text-align: center;">Opportunities</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Threats</th> </tr> <tr> <td> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ability to embrace secrecy, espionage, deception, surprise and concealment as a means to victory 2. Ability to demonstrate more cooperative and less competitive behaviors 3. Preference for work organized in groups </td> <td> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Frequently accepts having a sense of shame 2. Tends to be more prevalent in authoritarian states 3. On average, lower national wealth </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Strengths	Weaknesses	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Most prevalent societal organization with a focus on cooperation 2. Comfort with uncertainty and surprise 3. Thrift 4. Persistence and perseverance 5. Importance placed on the practice of virtue without as much concern for the truth 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Belief in cultural superiority 2. "Spiral of Silence" due to groups' influence on individual behavior 3. Difficulty in accepting risk and confrontation 4. Ordering relationships by status and strictly observing this order 5. More prevalent in autocratic government systems 	Opportunities	Threats	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ability to embrace secrecy, espionage, deception, surprise and concealment as a means to victory 2. Ability to demonstrate more cooperative and less competitive behaviors 3. Preference for work organized in groups 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Frequently accepts having a sense of shame 2. Tends to be more prevalent in authoritarian states 3. On average, lower national wealth
	Strengths	Weaknesses							
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Most prevalent societal organization with a focus on cooperation 2. Comfort with uncertainty and surprise 3. Thrift 4. Persistence and perseverance 5. Importance placed on the practice of virtue without as much concern for the truth 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Belief in cultural superiority 2. "Spiral of Silence" due to groups' influence on individual behavior 3. Difficulty in accepting risk and confrontation 4. Ordering relationships by status and strictly observing this order 5. More prevalent in autocratic government systems 							
	Opportunities	Threats							
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ability to embrace secrecy, espionage, deception, surprise and concealment as a means to victory 2. Ability to demonstrate more cooperative and less competitive behaviors 3. Preference for work organized in groups 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Frequently accepts having a sense of shame 2. Tends to be more prevalent in authoritarian states 3. On average, lower national wealth 								
NEGATIVE	EXTERNAL								

Figure 3
Individualism: SWOT Analysis

INTERNAL									
POSITIVE	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">Strengths</th> <th style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">Weaknesses</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "I" based fluid culture with an emphasis on individual achievement and self-reliance 2. On average, higher national wealth 3. Tends to favor liberalism as a political theory and capitalist economic system 4. Favors analytical thinking 5. Comfort with confrontation </td> <td> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not as comfortable with surprise or inconsistency 2. Overreliance on technology and science to solve problems 3. Overarching concern to always identify the truth 4. Preference for work organized around the individual or common task </td> </tr> <tr> <th style="text-align: center;">Opportunities</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Threats</th> </tr> <tr> <td> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Comfort in cross-cultural competence and ability to recognize diversity 2. Presence of millennial generation and their strengths in working as a team 3. Openness to change 4. Comfort in taking risks </td> <td> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determining where the boundary of inalienable rights exists 2. Tendency to substitute technology for strategy 3. Difficulty accepting those who do not play by the rules 4. Tendency to focus on immediate, tangible results, not long-term strategy </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Strengths	Weaknesses	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "I" based fluid culture with an emphasis on individual achievement and self-reliance 2. On average, higher national wealth 3. Tends to favor liberalism as a political theory and capitalist economic system 4. Favors analytical thinking 5. Comfort with confrontation 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not as comfortable with surprise or inconsistency 2. Overreliance on technology and science to solve problems 3. Overarching concern to always identify the truth 4. Preference for work organized around the individual or common task 	Opportunities	Threats	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Comfort in cross-cultural competence and ability to recognize diversity 2. Presence of millennial generation and their strengths in working as a team 3. Openness to change 4. Comfort in taking risks 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determining where the boundary of inalienable rights exists 2. Tendency to substitute technology for strategy 3. Difficulty accepting those who do not play by the rules 4. Tendency to focus on immediate, tangible results, not long-term strategy
	Strengths	Weaknesses							
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "I" based fluid culture with an emphasis on individual achievement and self-reliance 2. On average, higher national wealth 3. Tends to favor liberalism as a political theory and capitalist economic system 4. Favors analytical thinking 5. Comfort with confrontation 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not as comfortable with surprise or inconsistency 2. Overreliance on technology and science to solve problems 3. Overarching concern to always identify the truth 4. Preference for work organized around the individual or common task 							
	Opportunities	Threats							
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Comfort in cross-cultural competence and ability to recognize diversity 2. Presence of millennial generation and their strengths in working as a team 3. Openness to change 4. Comfort in taking risks 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determining where the boundary of inalienable rights exists 2. Tendency to substitute technology for strategy 3. Difficulty accepting those who do not play by the rules 4. Tendency to focus on immediate, tangible results, not long-term strategy 								
NEGATIVE	EXTERNAL								

* Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

This cross-cultural competence should not only be instructed to strategic leaders but also be present in institutional instruction at the operational and tactical levels of war. It therefore may need to be presented throughout professional military education and not just at its most senior level.

Personnel: Prioritize U.S. Individualist Values as a Component of Our Strategic Culture

Strategic Army and CA leaders must be willing to prioritize individualist values as a component of strategic culture. We can start by making our Army look more like the individualist U.S. society that makes up its ranks. This is particularly important given the large population of millennials that makes up the largest age cohort in the military. Millennials are seen generally as anyone born between 1981 and 1996 and are today between the ages of 26 and 41. The 2020 U.S. DoD demographics profile highlighted that approximately 47.4 percent of the total DoD military force is between the ages of 26 and 40—squarely in the millennial generation.⁴⁰ This cohort also currently makes up the vast majority of mid- to lower senior grade officers and NCOs. The individualism SWOT analysis shows the opportunity that flag officers and senior noncommissioned advisor leaders have to leverage the noncompetitive teamwork mindset of millennials and take time to explain the “why” in order to maximize their capability. By appealing to the individualism strengths of millennials, this group will better understand the tasks at hand and strengthen their resolve to complete it.⁴¹

Training: Leverage Clear U.S. Positional Advantages in Individualism over Collectivism

In order to address a weakness noted in the SWOT analysis, U.S. strategic leaders should learn to be more accepting of uncertainty and take advantage of it, much like the Chinese do.⁴² As noted, China’s and Russia’s strategic cultures are predicated on a preference for winning without fighting and for leveraging deception, ambiguity and secretiveness.⁴³ The United States may need to become more comfortable reassessing the importance it places on moral values, truth and playing by the rules. Training on scenarios at all levels of war that are contrary to American individualist values is difficult to embrace as we are not often comfortable with surprise or inconsistency. However, failure to expose our leaders to morally ambiguous surprises in training scenarios could potentially create strategic vulnerabilities or military risks.⁴⁴ Thanks to individualism’s appreciation and openness to change—along with a general comfort in taking risks—the United States has positional advantage over collectivist cultures and can be more accepting of these moments of surprise, as long as we can first train for them.

Areas for Further Investigation

While we have looked exclusively at Russian and Chinese collectivism to contrast U.S. individualism in this analysis, can we extend the recommendations noted to address other great-power rivals in the contemporary security environment? When we look at the “4+1” strategic threat framework, we could likely also see North Korea, Iran and violent extremist organizations more favorably embracing collectivism. There are some common collectivist characteristics that have been associated with all of our rivals’ strategic cultures, to include dreams of past glory, a history of humiliation, self-reliance and authoritarian popular control, among others.⁴⁵ However, further research would be needed to see if the SWOT analysis of one collectivist culture could simply be applied to others.

Additionally, as China in particular continues to become a wealthier country, and its citizens continue to grow in wealth, what effect will this have on the potential rise of individualist characteristics in Chinese society? More importantly, what effect will these individualist Western values potentially have on modern Chinese strategic culture? Further analysis needs to be done on how the United States can maintain long-term positional advantage; Hofstede's work has shown that countries become more individualist after they increase their wealth.⁴⁶

Conclusion

In the renewed age of great-power competition, we have seen that there is a significant clash of strategic cultures. We have examined the drivers of strategic culture and highlighted the characteristics of Chinese and Russian collectivism and U.S. individualism. We have conducted a SWOT analysis and proposed three DOTMLPF-P recommendations for a contemporary national security model that optimizes individualism as a key component of U.S. strategic culture.

CA's ability to build extended global civil-military networks is much of the answer to providing a global framework for how U.S. strategic culture based in individualism can best be optimized. CA leaders are economy-of-force advisors to the commander in how the cultural dimension impacts the strategic and operational environments and what the best military responses should be. We can help senior strategic leaders win in the world of strategic competition by making sure they can better understand the differences between individualism and collectivism. "Winning in competition is critical for the strategic interests of the U.S. government because it reduces the requirement to deploy and utilize combat forces."⁴⁷

Without a clear recognition and understanding of this strategic cultural divide, primarily shown in the differences between individualist and collectivist societies, the United States runs the risk of undermining its strategic agenda, including its most important positional advantage in great-power competition.⁴⁸ While culture is a key factor in contemporary international security, further research still needs to be done on the depth and scope of this influence.⁴⁹ Fortunately, the United States has the capacities and capabilities in multiple whole-of-nation aspects that strategic Army planners and CA leaders can leverage now to optimize a new national strategic culture model rooted in individualism.



Colonel Marco A. Bongioanni serves as a U.S. Army Reserve Civil Affairs officer and has held a variety of command and staff assignments. He is a graduate of the U.S. Army War College and a New York State Licensed Mental Health Counselor in his civilian career, working for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. His professional interests include human behavior and applied psychology. The views expressed in this paper are his alone and do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U.S. Army or of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Notes

¹ Gabriel Ben-Dor et al., "I Versus We," *Armed Forces & Society* 34, no. 4 (July 2008): 586.

² Brice F. Harris, *America, Technology and Strategic Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 152.

- ³ Ume Farwa, "Belt and Road Initiative and China's Strategic Culture," *Strategic Studies* 38, no. 3 (2018): 45.
- ⁴ Geert Hofstede, Gert Jan Hofstede and Michael Minkov, *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*, 3rd ed. (New York: McGraw Hill, 2010), 74.
- ⁵ Steven Metz and Douglas V. Johnson II, *Asymmetry and U.S. Military Strategy: Definition, Background, and Strategic Concepts* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2001), 1.
- ⁶ Russell D. Howard, *Strategic Culture* (MacDill Air Force Base, FL: Joint Special Operations University JSOU Report 13-8, December 2013), 1.
- ⁷ Jeffrey S. Lantis, "Strategic Culture: From Clausewitz to Constructivism," *Strategic Insights* 4, no. 10 (October 2005): 6–7.
- ⁸ Farwa, "Belt and Road Initiative and China's Strategic Culture," 43.
- ⁹ Geert Hofstede and Michael Harris Bond, "The Confucius Connection: From Cultural Roots to Economic Growth," *Organizational Dynamics* 16, no. 4 (Spring 1988): 5.
- ¹⁰ Hofstede and Bond, "The Confucius Connection," 16.
- ¹¹ Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov, *Cultures and Organizations*, 169.
- ¹² Vas Taras, Bradley L. Kirkman and Piers Steel, "Examining the Impact of Culture's Consequences: A Three-Decade, Multi-Level, Meta-Analytic Review of Hofstede's Cultural Value Dimensions," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 95, no. 3 (2010): 431.
- ¹³ Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov, *Cultures and Organizations*, 74.
- ¹⁴ Hofstede and Bond, "The Confucius Connection," 11.
- ¹⁵ Anne Lise Bjonstad and Pal Ulleberg, "Is Established Knowledge About Cross-Cultural Differences in Individualism-Collectivism Not Applicable to the Military? A Multi-Method Study of Cross-Cultural Differences in Behavior," *Military Psychology* 29, no. 6 (2017): 479.
- ¹⁶ Christopher Stone, "The Implications of Chinese Strategic Culture and Counter-Intervention Upon Department of Defense Space Deterrence Operations," *Comparative Strategy* 35, no. 5 (2016): 335.
- ¹⁷ Thomas Sole, *The Spiral of Silence in the U.S. Army*, Strategy Research Project (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, April 2017), 16.
- ¹⁸ Thomas G. Mahnken, *Secrecy and Stratagem: Understanding Chinese Strategic Culture* (Double Bay, NSW: Lowy Institute for International Policy, February 2011), 26.
- ¹⁹ Bjonstad and Ulleberg, "Established Knowledge About Cross-Cultural Differences," 485.
- ²⁰ Hofstede and Bond, "The Confucius Connection," 11.
- ²¹ Ben-Dor et al., "I Versus We," 586.
- ²² Eloise Forgette Malone and Chie Matsuzawa Paik, "Value Priorities of Japanese and American Service Academy Students," *Armed Forces & Society* 33, no. 2 (January 2007): 179.
- ²³ Ben-Dor et al., "I Versus We," 568.
- ²⁴ Mahnken, *Secrecy and Stratagem*, 5.
- ²⁵ Mahnken, *Secrecy and Stratagem*, 26.
- ²⁶ Andrew Scobell, "China's Real Strategic Culture: A Great Wall of the Imagination," *Contemporary Security Policy* 35, no. 2 (2014): 218–19.
- ²⁷ Brice F. Harris, "United States Strategic Culture and Asia-Pacific Security," *Contemporary Security Policy* 35, no. 2 (2014): 294.
- ²⁸ Stone, "The Implications of Chinese Strategic Culture," 335.
- ²⁹ Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov, *Cultures and Organizations*, 93.
- ³⁰ Joseph Henrich, Steven J. Heine and Ara Norenzayan, "The Weirdest People in the World?" *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 33, no. 2–3 (2010): 9.
- ³¹ Harris, "United States Strategic Culture and Asia-Pacific Security," 294.
- ³² Metz and Johnson, *Asymmetry and U.S. Military Strategy*, 12.
- ³³ Ifediora Christian Osita, Idoko Onyebuchi R. and Nzekwe Justina, "Organization's Stability and Productivity: The Role of SWOT Analysis an Acronym for Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and Threat," *International Journal of Innovative and Applied Research* 2, no. 9 (2014): 24.
- ³⁴ Osita, Onyebuchi and Justina, "Organization's Stability and Productivity," 27.

- ³⁵ Harris, *America, Technology and Strategic Culture*, 152.
- ³⁶ Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-57, *Civil Affairs Operations* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, July 2021), 4–21.
- ³⁷ Sean N. Fisher, *The Decisive Leadership Advantage: Mission Command in a Multinational Environment*, Strategy Research Project (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, April 2016), 13.
- ³⁸ Metz and Johnson, *Asymmetry and U.S. Military Strategy*, 22.
- ³⁹ Mark N. Brown, *The Impact of Strategic Culture and Cognition on U.S. Outcomes*, Strategy Research Project (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, March 2010), 14.
- ⁴⁰ DoD, *Demographics Profile of the Military Community 2020* (Washington, DC: U.S. DoD, 2020), 8.
- ⁴¹ Jason Halloren, *The Character and Motivation of Millennials: Understanding Tomorrow's Leaders*, Strategy Research Project (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, April 2015), 16–17.
- ⁴² Stone, “The Implications of Chinese Strategic Culture,” 341.
- ⁴³ Howard, *Strategic Culture*, 24.
- ⁴⁴ Metz and Johnson, *Asymmetry and U.S. Military Strategy*, 12.
- ⁴⁵ Howard, *Strategic Culture*, 65–71.
- ⁴⁶ Hofstede and Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations*, 353.
- ⁴⁷ FM 3-57, 3–20.
- ⁴⁸ Harris, “United States Strategic Culture and Asia-Pacific Security,” 302.
- ⁴⁹ Lantis, “Strategic Culture,” 31.

Back to Basics: Civil Affairs in a Global Civil-Military Network

by Major Jim Munene, USA, & Staff Sergeant Courtney Mulhern, USA

Introduction

The Civil Affairs Corps has a unique opportunity to shape its future and that of the U.S. Army. Civil affairs (CA) should proceed deliberately and expediently while gaining an understanding of what strategic competition truly is, employing the most current and available tools accordingly and demonstrating how CA can participate in a global civil-military network. By acknowledging and understanding what motivates U.S. competition and competition from its adversaries and allies, the United States can leverage strategic global networking and remain on top as a world leader.

Throughout the years, the United States has worked hard to ensure strategic and stable relationships in order to defend democratic values and the American way of life. As stated in the 2018 *National Defense Strategy*, “Our network of alliances and partnerships remain the backbone of global security.”¹ While relationships and networks have helped the United States successfully in years past, maintaining them must be continual and purposeful; this must be an ongoing priority. President Biden’s 2021 *Interim National Security Strategy (NSS) Guidance* states that the United States must lead with democracy and “revitalize America’s unmatched network of alliances and partnerships.”²

It is clear that the United States values its networks and partnerships throughout the world. Their retention does not come without many challenges, but CA Soldiers are capable and eager to play their part in advancing U.S. objectives. It has been well articulated that “as a diverse and people-centric force for influence, relationship building and competition, CA is an ideal force to demonstrate U.S. involvement and interest to contest adversarial powers and actors globally.”³

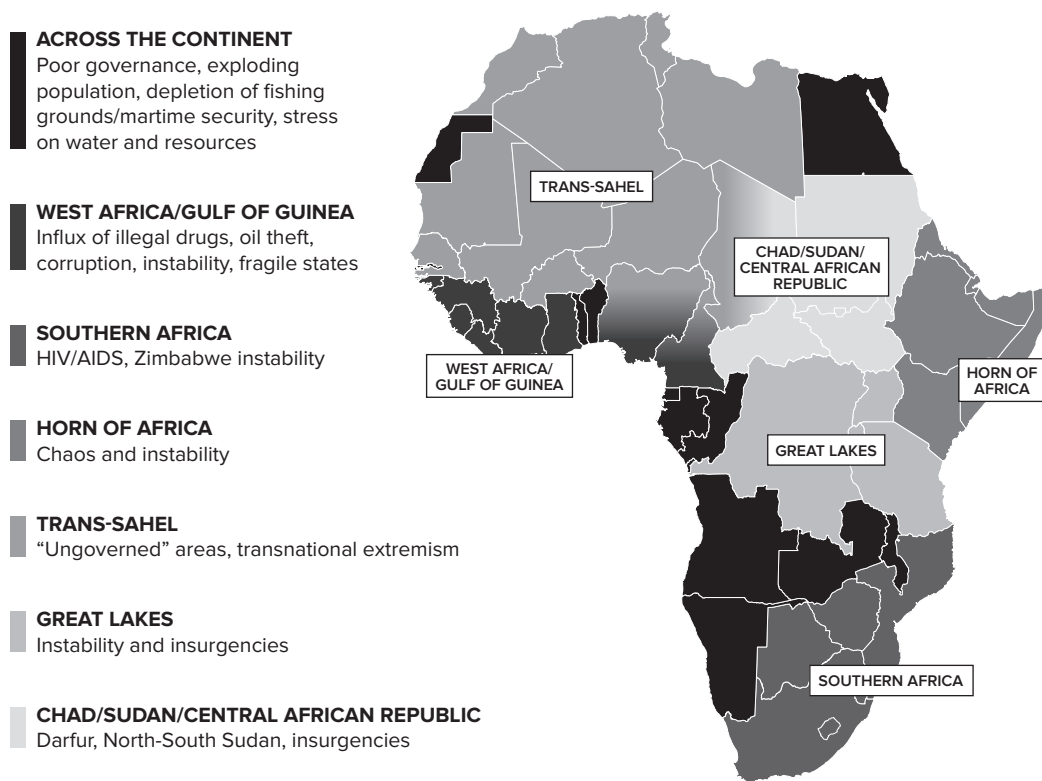
Maintaining a global civil-military network is fundamental to increasing the U.S. military capabilities in the 21st century. CA functions and core competencies support the importance of relationships and networking and must continue to be prioritized. To do this, paradoxically, the CA Corps must go back to the basics of CA operations (CAO) for the United States to maintain its global power in access and influence, especially in the gray zone.

Geographical Focus

Focusing on the U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) region, building a global civil-military network is of utmost importance in a continent facing many of its own challenges. In Africa as a whole, China is the United States’ biggest competitor in economics, politics and security. China has made abundantly clear its presence and strategic objectives across the continent of Africa. It is arguable that China is taking advantage of an unstable continent plagued with challenges to foster its own agenda in the region. The NSS suggests, “In many areas China’s leaders seek unfair advantages, behave aggressively, and coercively, and undermine the rules and values at the heart of an open and stable international system.”⁴ With a strong global civil-military network, the United States can defeat China as the main competition in the USAFRICOM region.

Figure 1

Africa: A Continent of Challenges⁵



China as the Biggest Great-Power Competitor in Africa

In order for there to be any type of competition, competitors need to understand their competition. According to American diplomat and former ambassador in Africa Davin H. Shinn, there are several things that motivate China's reach for influence in Africa. Access to raw materials, increasing exports to Africa and receiving international political support are China's main interests.⁶ Coupled with China's economic power, this makes China the biggest competitor with the United States in Africa because of their adversarial interests as great interventionist powers.

China's strategy of building its own global civil-military network in the USAFRICOM region is in heavily investing its finances, as evidenced by the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). In Ethiopia, for example, Chinese finance provides critical support for the Ethiopian government's legitimacy as electricity, transport and employment opportunities continue to expand, stimulating economic growth and helping promote exports to other countries. As a result, China is using its financial resources in technology, personnel and investments to influence the policies of the host nations (HNs).

China claims that its strategy does not intend to create "debt traps" but rather to build infrastructure and spark economic development in other countries as a win-win for them both. Whether or not this is true, the United States must consider if this strategy is realistic. In addition, China is not exactly known for either its transparency or being held accountable for its actions.

In building a global civil-military network, the United States should hold firm on its strategy for regional security, stability and peace, but it should not throw its financial might around to compete directly with China in funding projects in the USAFRICOM region. Analysts say that Ethiopia's firebrand prime minister, Abiy Ahmed, is positioning the country to leverage competition between the West and China to attract even greater investment and reduce the country's dependence on Beijing. With an unwavering strategy of regional security, stability and peace in the region, a U.S.-led, global, civil-military network would succeed. CA must recognize its role as such in competition in Africa and offensively participate because, as 2021 CA Roundtable keynote speaker Lieutenant General Eric J. Wesley, USA, Ret., stated, "You can't compete if you're not there."⁷

Strategy and Concept of Operations

Maintaining Sustainable Relationships

The core of building a global civil-military network begins with building and maintaining strong relationships between partners and working groups. According to Lieutenant General Charles Hooper, USA, Ret., relationships with partners built in an HN "must be persistent, not episodic." Hooper emphasized, "We're not building nations anymore, we're building networks." This concept is compulsory "to build the strategic, operational, and human capital necessary for competition even more than conflict."⁸

CAO in an HN should therefore involve an array of extracurricular activities with an intention of team building and cohesion by means of civil engagement (CE) and civil reconnaissance (CR). For example, in the Horn of Africa in Djibouti, deployed military personnel can take advantage of a game of soccer with the local nationals to gather information about the operational environment while staying in and maintaining the established lines of effort.

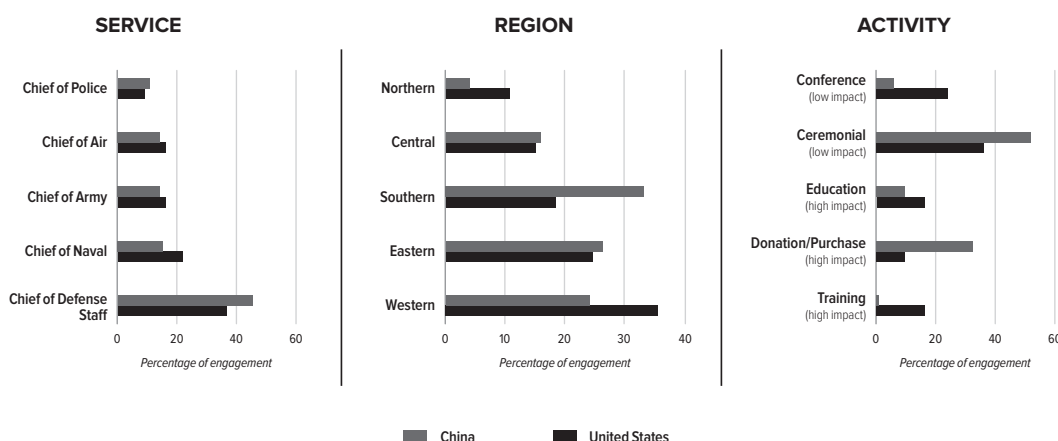
This simple extracurricular activity with the locals can create an atmosphere of trust on the soccer field that can translate to a great working relationship while conducting CAO. Once a strong relationship with the locals is built, other stakeholders and partners in the HN can be invited to participate. For example, during numerous deployments of CA teams to the Horn of Africa in 2020–2021 (some of which included the authors), American embassy personnel in Djibouti were invited and gladly joined the soccer games and other extracurricular activities run by the CA teams. What started as a mere series of soccer games slowly transitioned into an informal CAO working group because of the ongoing relationship built over time. This is a small, tactical demonstration of how forces like CA can be a multiplier to other agencies to expand America's soft power and the positional advantages of access and influence at the heart of strategic competition. If more CA forces were deployed for such forward CR and CE missions, as strategic sensors, the strategic and operational values-added to both commanders statespersons could be more decisive than helpful.

Worth noting is the art of building relationships through partnerships, coalitions and alliances. This entails CAO and military liaisons working together with security force assistance brigades (SFABs), National Guard state partners, security cooperation initiatives, embassies, foreign area officers (FAOs), the Organization of African Unity (OAU), African Mission Somalia (AMISOM), the Peace Corps, commercial enterprises, humanitarian groups and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Both China and the United States have interests in maintaining influence with the United Nations (UN) and the African Union (AU). Currently, Africa has 54 countries in the UN, amounting to more than one-quarter of all UN members. According to the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations for 2020–2021, the United States is the top provider, at 27.89 percent of assessed contributions, with China following at 15.21 percent. However, China has deployed more peacekeepers to Africa missions than any other UN Security Council permanent member.⁹

A study published in August 2021 conducted by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) measured Chinese and U.S. engagements with African security chiefs. The study showed that “China has engaged less than 19% of current and former African security chiefs, while the United States has engaged almost 43%.”¹⁰ This translates to China engaging with top African security chiefs at less than half the rate of the United States. This also translates as a limit to Chinese relationship-building and an advantage for the United States and CA to maintain.

Figure 2
Chinese and U.S. Engagements in Africa¹¹



Source: Center for Strategic and International Studies

As it pertains to Chinese relations within Africa, there are strains in the relationships created by hefty loans related to infrastructure projects. Countries such as Djibouti, Kenya and Uganda have massive debts owed to China due to road and railway development. This could lead to conflict over the loan terms, defaulting on loans and, most of all, strained relations. The Center for African Studies states that China is learning to be more disciplined with loan terms and agreements, such as in Kenya, where loan terms changed to include their Indian Ocean port of Mombasa as collateral for the loan the government secured from China’s Exim Bank to build the Mombasa–Nairobi railway.¹²

The facts and numbers remain: Africa is indebted to China as a part of its global strategy. Shinn argues that an increase in economic dependency leads to an increase in security and political dependency.¹³ The increase in strained relations due to China’s global-networking strategy in Africa provides the United States an opportunity to increase CA engagements, leading to a larger U.S. presence and to the United States being Africa’s preferred partner.

The Impact of Social Media in the Global Network

When it comes to global networking, technology and social media are the key components and will continue to be as the world advances. In 2021, it was estimated that out of the 7.7 billion people in the world, 3.96 billion people are currently using some form of social media. Furthermore, 58.11 percent of the world's population above the age of 13 is active on social media. In the United States alone, 90 percent of Generation Z (ages 18–29) have at least one social media account.¹⁴

In 2020, Facebook was the leading social network with 2.7 billion users worldwide. YouTube and WhatsApp followed with 2 billion, then Messenger, WeChat and Instagram, all having 1 billion or more users. By 2021, newcomer TikTok had joined the 1 billion user club.¹⁵ These numbers are only increasing, and this means that the current and upcoming generation of military members use social media as part of their everyday lives and as a part of their military service. These statistics indicate how important virtual relationships and connections are to people around the world. The military needs to capitalize on this method of networking to develop and maintain relationships around the world.

In a real-world CAO example, when missions were canceled and Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti was shut down in 2020 due to COVID-19, social media was the only link between maintaining relationships already formed and continuing the mission. CA teams (CATs) had to adjust fire to the mission and, as the world did, adapt to the new virtual normal. Communicating through WhatsApp became the method by which CAO maintains presence and influence. You cannot compete if you are not actively participating in the present place and time. It should be noted that some relationships perished because of not being able to connect in person. It can be hard to recover those relationships once momentum has been lost and new CATs cycle through different missions.

Regarding competition with China as it relates to social media, there really is no level competition. China strictly monitors social media sites within its borders, and the United States should use this to its advantage. China does not allow Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube or Instagram,¹⁶ all sites that could be useful in aiding in influence on the global scale. Google and its related sites are not available without a virtual private network (VPN), and instead China uses its own search engine, Baidu, to censor and monitor searched information. Chinese-owned TikTok, developed by ByteDance,¹⁷ is not even allowed for its citizens. Rather they use their own, Douyin, and neither app can be accessed by the other. These Chinese limitations to free and open networking provide a huge advantage for the U.S. military in terms of competition; this needs to be capitalized on before China decides to join the world in social networking.

Social media as it relates to global networking does not come without its own set of challenges. One never fully knows who they are connecting with on the other side of a screen or who could potentially be seeing the correspondence. Other risks include the matter of operational security (OPSEC), the potential for unprofessional behavior and communication lost in translation that could be detrimental to the relationship. In addition, there is also the issue of the overlap between psychological operations (PSYOP) and the public affairs office (PAO). The PSYOP mission could be to get certain themes and messages out, and that could duplicate efforts with the CA mission. This issue reinforces that both CA and PSYOP need to be working closely together in a partnership. The PAO has its own mission set and various social media sites it uses. CA would need to differentiate between networking with actual partners on a personal level and getting out messages to the masses

for the greater good of the U.S. military. In addition, the CSIS declares that “both Chinese and U.S. government and media coverage have limited reach and influence in Africa,” and that “most U.S. engagements are posted on the U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) website, embassy pages, and social media—including the photo-sharing website Flickr—which Africans do not frequently visit.”¹⁸ This needs to be considered in the CA strategy when competing for a global network.

Social networking sites allow people to connect 24 hours a day and seven days a week in almost every corner of the world. The global social network already established through sites such as Facebook would be critical in fostering partnerships and allies and for increasing favorability with the U.S. military when compared to its competition. Perhaps each CAT or company in-country could administer a Facebook group, which could be passed on to CATs cycling through. This would aid in greater continuity as well as user-friendliness compared to inconsistent file sharing and various databases. This would also prevent servicemembers from having to use their personal accounts with personally identifiable information (PII), family information and pictures. Social media will not fade away anytime soon, and CA will need to make this a priority in order to stay relevant as a top contender with its competitors.

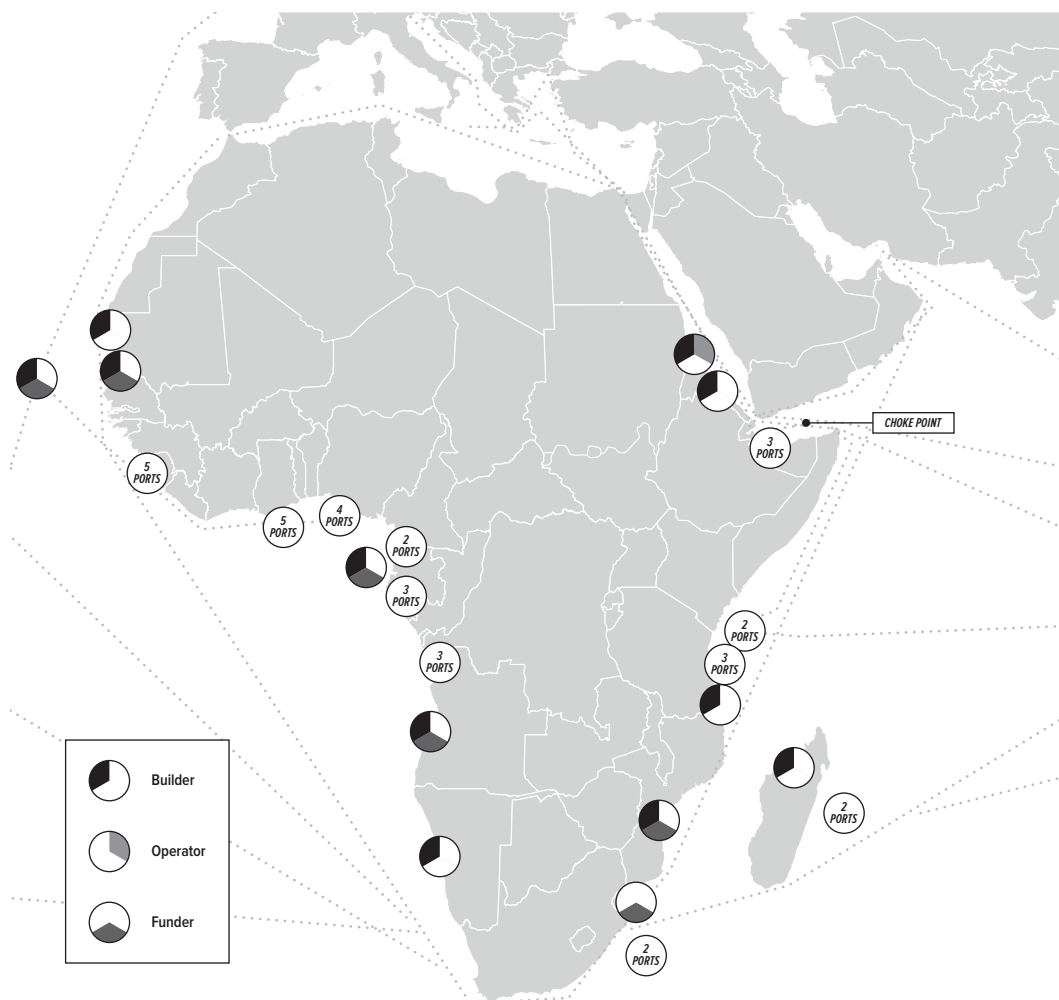
Security and Stability

Security in any nation is crucial to any sort of stability and progress. Without security, nations can be vulnerable to adversaries taking advantage of the instability, socioeconomic deprivation and general uncertainty. Take, for example, Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti. The U.S. presence alone provides Djibouti enough security from the hostilities from neighboring Somalia, and the instabilities across the Red Sea in the Middle East in Yemen, to have a positive outlook on its economy. Djibouti’s output growth was set to reach 5.5 percent in 2021 and to average 6.2 percent over 2022 and 2023.¹⁹ This growth is in part due to its ports but also in part to the nation’s security. With this stability over time, other world players will want to invest, providing Djibouti with autonomy and the ability to move away from dependence on competitors like China. The United States can then empower Djibouti to compete with China in its own arena, and the relationships cultivated over time will be strengthened because of the success of Djibouti as the HN with the United States.

Political instability and security issues have led to some Chinese contracts and projects not going forward and subsequently not being paid. In 2016, 300 Chinese oil workers had to be evacuated in South Sudan due to a shoot-out between rival militias. This has led to an uptick in “private security” agencies going to Africa in large numbers.²⁰ “Private security” is misleading, as the groups are still controlled by China and serve its interests. Weapons restrictions and other cross-cultural differences could lead to unrest between China and Africa, and the United States should also consider this a part of its networking strategy.

From a global-networking security standpoint, the U.S. military needs to be mindful of the growing port investments in Africa made by China. Figure 3 shows the various port projects that Chinese companies have financed, constructed or operated. There are at least 46 ports across sub-Saharan Africa, all of which have been built according to People’s Liberation Army (PLA) Navy specifications.²¹ Figure 3 demonstrates ports along both the west and east coastlines, giving access to both Atlantic and Pacific waters. Additionally, while the United States has its Camp Lemonnier base in Djibouti, China has its only overseas PLA base there as well. It is no coincidence that this geographically significant location has

Figure 3
Chinese Port Investments in Africa²²



Source: Center for Strategic and International Studies

high strategic value for its competitors, and China has made it clear that it intends to be a global military power.

Additionally, tapping into the cyber and satellite arenas while strengthening these two industries should also be a part of the U.S. military strategy as it relates to building a global network. The cyber world has become the new way to conduct business and warfare. Having coalition partners in the HN will boost the United States' ability to counter cyber-crimes when they are conducted in a distant land where the United States does not have law enforcement jurisdiction. As for the satellites, the United States is the leader in GPS technology. Working with coalition partners and HNs, the United States is better positioned to coordinate its GPS capabilities to foster a stronger global civil-military network and to counter and dismantle electronic warfare activities from adversaries.

Conclusion

Building a global civil-military network is fundamental to increasing the United States' military capabilities and national interests in the 21st century. USAFRICOM, alongside its African and interagency partners, is charged with the responsibility of enhancing security and stability in Africa to advance and protect U.S. national interests, which it has successfully done. It needs to be maintained regardless of the competition.

According to Advocacy Network for Africa (ADNA), based in Washington, DC, a few suggestions to facilitate a stronger global civil-military network would be to “advocate more U.S. support and resources for human rights, conflict resolution, and negotiation in Africa to develop long-term peace based on the often-difficult agreements among different legitimate stakeholders, including the many varieties of Islamic and Islamist organizations across Africa.”²³

Countries need to be empowered by U.S. relations to stimulate their own economy and provide infrastructure within their own borders. While China provides capital, the United States puts efforts into building relationships, and what people want are trustworthy partners and healthy working relationships. The offensive solution to competing with China in the Horn of Africa is to build and foster relationships with HNs and allies.

China's strategy is well thought out and calculated. It will do what it takes to be a global superpower, and it is obvious that its infrastructure projects, loans, security postures and “private security” agencies all lead back to keeping its communist party in power. The United States cannot only rely on its past successes and reputation to stay in competition. More than ever, CA needs to have active participation as it relates to global networking, and that should be done by going back to the basics of CAO: being proficient in CA doctrine, sustaining relations, staying relevant in the social media arena and supporting a security stance that benefits the United States' best interests while empowering the HN.

Building a global civil-military network is a strategic direction that the United States takes. It is nested in the national interests and policy goals of protecting the American way of life, achieving economic prosperity, attaining peace through strength and advancing American influence. The end state goal is for the United States to successfully compete with other world nations over the long term and to preserve global security.



Major Jim Munene is the Delta Company Commander at the 492nd Civil Affairs Battalion in Buckeye, Arizona. Originally from Kenya, Munene deployed to the Horn of Africa as a civilian contractor and was able to see challenges faced in Africa as a civilian and as a part of the U.S. Army.

Staff Sergeant Courtney Mulhern is in Delta Company at the 492nd Civil Affairs Battalion in Buckeye, Arizona. Mulhern was deployed to Djibouti, Africa, in 2020 with the 411th CA Battalion and served as a team sergeant. Mulhern faced challenges with COVID-19 shutting down missions but was able to gain an international CA perspective in Africa.

Notes

- ¹ The White House, *Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy of the United States of America*, 2018, <https://dod.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/2018-National-Defense-Strategy-Summary.pdf>.
- ² The White House, *Interim National Security Strategy Guidance*, 2021, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/NSC-1v2.pdf>.
- ³ Civil Affairs Association, “2021–22 Civil Affairs Call for Issue Papers,” *Eunomia Journal*, 23 June 2021, <https://www.civilaffairsassoc.org/post/2021-22-civil-affairs-call-for-issue-papers>.
- ⁴ Africa Center for Strategic Studies, “China’s Interests in Africa—Amb. David Shinn,” YouTube, 16 August 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s7Ki79BqYwE>.
- ⁵ Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns, “Africa: Concerns About U.S. Military Policy,” *NewsNotes* 40, no. 4 (May–June 2015), <https://www.maryknollogc.org/article/africa-concerns-about-us-military-policy>.
- ⁶ Simon Marks, “Ethiopia Plays Europe Off China in Bid to Boost Investment,” *Politico*, 2021, <https://www.politico.eu/article/ethiopia-plays-europe-off-china-in-bid-to-boost-investment/>.
- ⁷ Colonel Christopher Holshek, USA, Ret., *2021 Civil Affairs Roundtable Report—Roundtable Identifies Opportunity for Civil Affairs to Help Shape “Competition”* (Fort Bragg, NC: Civil Affairs Association, May 2021), 2.
- ⁸ Colonel Christopher Holshek, USA, Ret., “2020 Civil Affairs Symposium Report,” in Volume 7, 2020–2021 *Civil Affairs Issue Papers: Civil Affairs: A Force for Influence in Competition* (Arlington, VA: AUSA, March 2021), 6.
- ⁹ “How We Are Funded,” United Nations Peacekeeping, <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/how-we-are-funded>.
- ¹⁰ Judd Devermont, Marielle Harris and Alison Albelda, “Personal Ties: Measuring Chinese and U.S. Engagement with African Security Chiefs,” Center for Strategic and International Studies, 4 August 2021, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/personal-ties-measuring-chinese-and-us-engagement-african-security-chiefs>.
- ¹¹ Devermont, Harris and Albelda, “Personal Ties.”
- ¹² Paul Nantulya, “Implications for Africa from China’s One Belt One Road Strategy,” Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 22 March 2019, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/implications-for-africa-china-one-belt-one-road-strategy/>.
- ¹³ Africa Center for Strategic Studies, “China’s Interests in Africa.”
- ¹⁴ Brian Dean, “How Many People Use Social Media in 2021?” Backlinko, 10 October 2021, <https://backlinko.com/social-media-users>.
- ¹⁵ Dean, “How Many People Use Social Media.”
- ¹⁶ Dean, “How Many People Use Social Media.”
- ¹⁷ Salvador Rodriguez, “TikTok Insiders Say Social Media Company Is Tightly Controlled by Chinese Parent ByteDance,” *CNBC*, 25 June 2021, <https://www.cnbc.com/2021/06/25/tiktok-insiders-say-chinese-parent-bytedance-in-control.html>.
- ¹⁸ “The List of Blocked Websites in China,” *Sapore Di Cina*, 8 November 2021, <https://www.saporedicina.com/english/list-of-blocked-websites-in-china/>.
- ¹⁹ “The World Bank in Djibouti,” World Bank, 1 November 2021, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/djibouti/overview>.
- ²⁰ Paul Nantulya, “Chinese Security Firms Spread Along the African Belt and Road,” Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 15 June 2021, <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/chinese-security-firms-spread-african-belt-road/>.
- ²¹ Judd Devermont, “Assessing the Risks of Chinese Investments in Sub-Saharan African Ports,” Center for Strategic and International Studies, 4 June 2021, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/assessing-risks-chinese-investments-sub-saharan-african-ports>.
- ²² Devermont, “Assessing the Risks of Chinese Investments.”
- ²³ Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns, “Africa: Concerns About U.S. Military Policy.”



The Civil Affairs Association

www.civilaffairsassoc.org