



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

COMMANDER
U.S. JOINT FORCES COMMAND
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IN REPLY REFER TO:


11 March 2009

MEMORANDUM FOR U.S. JOINT FORCES COMMAND

Subject: Irregular Warfare Vision

1. Commanders must balance the capability to wage conventional war and the ability to adapt rapidly and effectively to meet the full spectrum of other demands. Prominent among these demands is Irregular Warfare (IW). To operate with success in this complex and challenging environment, our forces must have well-educated leaders, trained teams, and engaged partners working in unity to conduct joint operations.
2. USJFCOM will prepare and provide joint forces to execute its role in the US Government's solution to the challenges posed by irregular adversaries. We must understand the future will be characterized by uncertainty, complexity, persistent engagement, rapid change, and be cognizant of the potential shocks and developing trends that impact the global environment. IW is not a new phenomenon; the American experience alone has yielded many valuable lessons from our revolutionary days to places as diverse as the Philippines, Nicaragua, Korea, Vietnam, Haiti, Somalia, and now Afghanistan and Iraq. To meet the challenges of IW, the Department of Defense (DoD) released DoD Directive 3000.07 *Irregular Warfare* to establish policy and assign responsibilities for the conduct of IW and the development of capabilities to address irregular challenges to national security.
3. USJFCOM will craft a way forward and prioritize specific efforts necessary to achieve the objectives and guidance of DoD Directive 3000.07. My goal is to ensure the DoD is as effective in IW as it is in conventional warfare. We will focus on establishment of IW as a General Purpose Force core competency in order to ensure success in the full spectrum of operations of today and the future. We will act with urgency, diligence, and transparency. We will maintain a bias for action, lead when appropriate, collaborate openly and strongly support multinational, agency, department, joint, Service and intelligence community elements working to institutionalize IW capability and capacity. In achieving this vision, I want to emphasize that IW is a command wide priority and all directorates, agencies, subordinate and component commands will either lead or support these efforts. Excellence in IW will be an enduring theme, demanding our sustained focus, and being achieved without losing either our nuclear or conventional superiority.
4. Internally, the Joint Irregular Warfare Center (JIWC) will prioritize efforts, proactively coordinate activities, provide subject matter expertise, and partner on IW related matters. Externally, the JIWC will collaborate closely with multinational and interagency partners, the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low-Intensity Conflict and Interdependent Capabilities (ASD/SOLIC&IC), the Joint Staff, Services, combatant commands and the intelligence community.

5. Periodic assessment of our progress by feedback from our many partners will be key to our ultimate success, and will be an important part of executing my vision. We will develop mature metrics with which to assess our efforts.



J. N. MATTIS
General, U.S. Marine Corps

Attachment:

(1) USJFCOM Irregular Warfare Vision

USJFCOM Irregular Warfare Vision

“...for decades there has been no strong, deeply rooted constituency inside the Pentagon or elsewhere for institutionalizing the capabilities necessary to wage asymmetric or irregular conflict – and to quickly meet the ever-changing needs of forces engaged in these conflicts.”

–Robert M. Gates, National Defense University, September 1, 2008

Innovative, adaptive leadership at the lowest levels is fundamental to successfully conducting Irregular Warfare (IW) and conventional warfare. We must capitalize on the strengths of our General Purpose Force (GPF) and Special Operations Force (SOF) to deploy a joint force of well educated, well trained, well equipped leaders and teams, who understand IW within the operating environment, and who are able to act ethically and effectively on commander's intent with initiative and appropriate judgment. We must also continue to emphasize the importance of personal relationships and trust at all levels within the irregular environment, enabling a necessary decentralized, synergistic approach while conducting operations – these personal relationships transcend command and organizational relationships, doctrine, and all else.

Our conventional warfare superiority will not be forfeited, but the challenges involved in preparing to meet regular and nuclear threats must not push preparations to counter irregular threats into the background, as occurred in the decades after the Vietnam War. We must reinforce the significant accomplishments of the Services and ensure that as we collectively build a balanced future military force in our concepts, experimentation, training and education we draw upon their ability to wage full spectrum operations and ensure that each service is postured to address both current and future challenges. IW will likely be the most persistent form of conflict our nation faces over the next two decades, often manifesting itself in war's usual “chameleon” or “hybrid” manner. As you execute your responsibilities your understanding of future trends and joint operating constructs, and your grasp of the past will be fundamental to success. The *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations (CCJO)* and the *Joint Operational Environment (JOE)* are key documents that will shape our thinking on the future and its challenges. Read them critically and apply them appropriately to your work.

“Any nation that assumes it is inherently superior to another is setting itself up for disaster.”

***-- Thomas X. Hammes
“The Sling and the Stone”***

The recent realization of IW's relevance and importance is long overdue and a confirmation of what has been obvious to any student of history for decades. As you examine doctrine, capabilities and lessons learned, pay particular attention to the Second Lebanon War. Its lessons provide unique insight into the capabilities that irregular forces of tomorrow may possess, fighting in a hybrid manner that denies simple categorization. The study and comprehension of the dynamic and ever-changing multifaceted environment seen in this and other irregular conflicts is illuminating the direction and efforts to create a more versatile and effective balanced

joint force. War is war, plain and simple. Thus, always remember that *“The decisive combat occurs in and about the minds of civilians, not on the battlefield”* and *“Military defeat of the irregular force is desirable, but not essential. It is his political defeat, his delegitimation, that is crucial.”*¹

I view IW as a fluid effort that is mutually supportive, overlapping, and usually simultaneous in implementation. There are significant challenges, especially for our commanders and forces that have the task of balancing time and resources in order to ready a formation to accomplish its core mission along the spectrum of conflict. No finite list of tasks or operations can cover every dimension, but the following activities and categories should be considered when framing our approach while addressing joint capabilities, doctrine, concepts, education and training.

- Information and the Battle of Competing Narratives
- Providing Essential Services
- Training and Equipping (or Developing) Local Forces
- Combat Operations
- Governance
- Economic Development

USJFCOM is charged with achieving a balanced joint force where IW is a core competency. This joint force must be able to conduct decentralized operations in small, high performing, network enabled units that are capable of aggregating and disaggregating, to meet the joint force commander campaign and complex contingency requirements, across the full spectrum of war’s complexities. USJFCOM will incorporate NATO, as our primary military alliance, where possible using Allied Command Transformation’s staff as an entry point for collaboration. This will not constrain us from working bilaterally with allies and other partner nations to the maximum degree in support of U.S. policy. Integrating USJFCOM’s Unified Command Plan responsibilities into concept development, experimentation, with well defined metrics, capabilities development, doctrine, training and education will ensure unified action that increases the IW proficiency and competency of the joint force.

Concept Development and Experimentation:

Concepts and experimentation form the intellectual underpinnings which serve as the catalyst for change. We will work with our interagency, multinational, combatant command, service, and intelligence community partners to identify the most important challenges we are facing in IW, develop concepts, and evaluate capabilities solutions to address them. Once identified, concepts and capabilities solutions will be transitioned into DOTMLPF enhancements for the joint force.

1. In the next six months the J5, J9, and JIWC will work closely with USSOCOM and the services to update the IW Joint Operating Concept to improve its relevance and utility to the GPF, the interagency and our multinational partners. (J9 lead)

¹ Colin Gray, “Irregular Warfare, One Nature, Many Characters,” *Strategic Studies Quarterly* (Winter 2007).

2. As part of the Chairman's annual Joint Assessment, the JIWC will identify and submit IW-related Joint Warfighter Challenges and proposed Joint Operating Concepts (JOC). The JIWC will function as the sponsor of these Challenges / JOC, should they be selected for inclusion in the JCD&E Campaign Plan. (JIWC lead)

3. In the next six months, the JIWC, in coordination with the J9, will review the scheduled experiments in the FY10 JCD&E Campaign Plan to determine relevancy and influence the exploration of joint force irregular warfare capabilities requirements. This review will include timely consideration on the progress of the ongoing FY09 projects in execution to recommend which should be continued or adjusted to better influence joint force irregular warfare capabilities requirements. In both cases, the hybrid threat observed during the Second Lebanon War provides a baseline to explore what capabilities the GPF will require to defeat future irregular forces, as well as insights into the most effective strategies and capabilities to influence, dissuade, deter and, if necessary, defeat them. (JIWC lead)

4. In the near and mid-term (6-12 months), J5, J7, J8, J9, Joint Center for Operational Analysis (JCOA), and JIWC will identify and harness the IW 'best practices' derived by experimentation efforts being carried out by the geographical combatant commanders in theater. Together we will identify methods to transition 'best practices' into DOTMLPF solutions. (JIWC and JCOA co-lead)

NOTE: Problem-definition and LOE's; not broadly composed, diffuse experiments will be our approach....

Capability Development / Joint Integration and Interoperability

IW consists of a wide range of operations whose execution is enabled by capabilities solutions developed through DoD's Joint Capability Integration Development System, Defense Acquisition System, and the Planning, Programming, and Budget Execution processes. Priority should be given to the unification of capability solution development activities across these processes to ensure approaches and solutions are interoperable, feasible, and delivered in accordance with requisite timelines. We will collaborate with OSD, combatant commanders, services and the intelligence community to coordinate, prioritize, synchronize and integrate capability solutions development activities. We will do this in order to avoid excesses and redundancy and increase the overall effectiveness of the joint force and its partners, while anticipating and solving well defined problems/obstacles to joint force effectiveness.

1. In the next nine months, J8 and JIWC will collaborate with combatant commands and the services to identify joint IW-relevant capabilities. Once these capabilities are identified, JIWC will recommend priorities for capability development to ASD/SOLIC&IC and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS). (J8 and JIWC co-lead)

2. J6 will work closely with the Joint Chiefs of Staff J6, U.S. Strategic Command, OSD/NII, DISA, other combatant commands to standardize and optimize the network enabled capabilities and services provided by the Global Information Grid in support of small units at the tactical edge conducting IW. (J6 lead)

Training and Education:

IW is war, and war is principally a human endeavor. Common characteristics of irregular and complex operations extend beyond the military domain. Understanding the culture, beliefs, values and expectations of the relevant population is fundamental to success. A solid training and education foundation enables commanders and their staffs to operate more effectively in this complex and highly variable environment. The collaborative development and institutionalization of joint IW-relevant doctrine will unify and guide service efforts and greatly facilitate the planning and conduct of irregular warfare. USSOCOM is a vital partner in this effort to ensure a mutually supportive relationship and seamless transition between SOF and GPF.

1. In the mid and long term (6-12 months), the J5, J7, J9 and JIWC will work closely to develop joint doctrine that guides and enables joint force commanders to plan and execute IW across the four categories of military activity; combat, security, engagement, and relief and reconstruction. We will identify the key ideas and best practices emerging from concepts and swiftly distribute them to the joint force commanders through IW-specific doctrinal analysis reports, Joint Warfighting Center (JWFC) pamphlets and White Papers, and the development of Commander's Handbooks, collaborating their collection and writing with all concerned. (J7 lead)
2. The J7 will continue to lead the development and implementation of IW-related tasks into joint force commander training. The J7 will maintain the focused and aggressive IW efforts it has demonstrated over the last year. (J7 lead)
3. Within the next six months, the J7 and the JIWC will develop and implement a USJFCOM IW Professional Development Program. (J7 and JIWC co-lead)
4. The JIWC will continue to partner with USSOCOM and expand the IW community of interest within USJFCOM, the DoD, the interagency, and our multinational partners. (JIWC lead)
5. Within the next six months, the J7 and JIWC will collaborate with the services and joint academic institutions to institutionalize IW education into the military's Professional Military Education (PME) curriculum and drive it down to the lowest level appropriate. (J7 lead)
6. The J2, J7 and JIWC will collaborate with the intelligence community to identify additional analysis and collection skills and training necessary to support IW operations. Within six months, we will promulgate our initial recommendations to create or modify training and curriculum. Recommendations will be updated annually. (J2 lead)
7. Within the next six months, J7 and the Joint Personnel Recovery Agency (JPRA) will collaborate with the Services, the combatant commanders and the interagency to identify the next level of risk populations for a personnel recovery event in an IW environment. JPRA will coordinate a plan with the Services to train these individuals. (JPRA lead)

Joint Force Provision / Global Force Management

The establishment of and training to relevant joint standards, identification and expansion of critical IW skills, and the assessment of the ability of the Armed Forces to conduct IW are key steps to accomplishing the ultimate goal of a military that is as proficient in IW as it is in conventional warfare.

1. The J7 and the JIWC, working closely with the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)), Joint Staff, and the Services, will collaboratively develop the joint standards for GPF IW-relevant training for units and individuals to meet joint commanders' warfighting requirements. (J7 lead)

2. The J3/4 will lead collaboration efforts between the Services, USD (P&R), and the Geographic Combatant Commanders (GCC) to establish and standardize readiness reporting metrics. (J3/4 lead)

3. Within the next 18 months, J02HR and the JIWC will work collaboratively with the GCC's, USSOCOM, USSTRATCOM and the Services to assist USD (P&R) in identifying the tracking requirements for critical skills and experiences relevant to IW. (J02HR and JIWC co-lead)

External Engagement

1. JCOA will continue to focus on capturing, analyzing, and disseminating IW lessons learned and best practices as a top priority. (JCOA lead)

2. The JIWC will collaborate with the services and the combatant commands to identify necessary metrics and submit an annual assessment of U.S. Armed Forces GPF proficiency and readiness for IW to the CJCS. (JIWC lead)

3. Special Operations Command Joint Forces Command (SOCJFCOM) will leverage its relationship with USSOCOM and the Special Operations community to facilitate USJFCOM-USSOCOM interaction and directly support the JIWC's efforts to align with USSOCOM. (SOCJFCOM lead)

4. Within the next 18 months, the Joint Warfare Analysis Center (JWAC), J5, J9 and JIWC will develop measures of effectiveness that will facilitate and guide the joint force in the planning and execution of IW. (JWAC lead)

Summary:

The implementation of this vision is the command's priority. The lack of sufficient joint doctrine, education, training and integrated capability to address irregular threats and conduct IW are apparent. The guidance, direction and importance the Secretary of Defense has placed on correcting this imbalance are clear. USJFCOM will lead the DoD in the collaborative effort to

deploy joint forces that are as effective in conducting irregular warfare as they are in conventional warfare. We will act in strong partnership with interagency, multinational, OSD, Joint Staff, combatant command, Service, and intelligence community partners.

This effort will require the command to embrace new responsibilities outside the scope of traditional work, reprioritize resources, establish new partnerships, adopt new priorities and work across the command to quickly and effectively complete the goals and tasks discussed above and those that will surely emerge in the future.

My intent is that every individual at this command has a bias for action. Consciously examine your words and actions to prevent a “not my job” or “business as usual” attitude. Our success will require innovative thinking, a spirit of cooperation, dedication, hard work and sacrifice. Our nation and its men and women deployed in harm’s way deserve no less.