

A Global Counter-Insurgency Campaign Plan for the War on Terror

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IN 2003, THE DEPARTMENT of Defense approved the USSOCOM counter-terrorism campaign plan, which includes both direct and indirect actions to achieve the strategic objective of defeating radical Islamic organizations. After reassessing the nature of the war and the enemy, it is now time to change the campaign plan from a counter-terrorism framework to a global counter-insurgency framework. Although written for the operational level, FM 3-24 Counter-Insurgencies provides a useful method for developing a global counter-insurgency strategic framework. FM 3-24 directs the use of Logical Lines of Operation (LLOs) in the design of a counter-insurgency plan. Commanders use LLOs to visualize, describe and direct operations when positional reference to enemy forces has little relevance. A plan based on LLOs unifies the efforts of joint, interagency, multinational and partner nation forces toward a common purpose. Each LLO represents a conceptual category along which agencies and partner nations intend to attack the insurgent/enemy strategy. This construct facilitates attacking the enemy strategy, not just the enemy forces.

Success requires careful coordination along all LLOs. Success also depends upon the support of partner nation institutions, and their ability to provide basic services, economic opportunity, public order and security. Military forces can compel obedience and secure areas. They cannot by themselves achieve the decisive point needed to resolve an insurgency. The proposed campaign framework is composed of seven LLOs: combat operations, homeland defense, WMD/E non-proliferation, partner nation security force development, economic development, development for global infrastructure for democracy, and information operations.

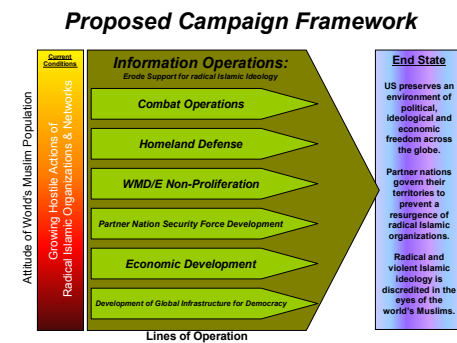


Figure 1. Proposed Counter-insurgency Campaign Framework.

The Seven LLOs

The Combat Operations LLO has been the main effort in the first six years of the war. Actions along this line of operation disrupt the ability of radical Islamic organizations to operate effectively over time. These actions focus on attacking the network infrastructure and leadership that provides the enemy global access and connectivity. These actions attack the organizations and the resources they need to operate and survive over the long-term. Finally, actions along this line of operation provide sufficient time to allow the effects from the other lines of operation.

The Homeland Defense LLO consists of both offensive and defensive actions taken by DoD and other U.S. government agencies to deter the enemy from conducting future attacks against the U.S. or U.S. interests. Actions along this line protect the United States' strategic center of gravity and critical capabilities—U.S. national will, international legitimacy and the global economy. As in the first LLO, actions along this line of operation will provide sufficient time to allow the effects from the other lines of operation.

The WMD/E Non-Proliferation LLO is oriented directly on the enemy's desires to obtain WMD/E. This line of operation consists of those actions designed to deny acquisition, development and/or use of WMD/E by radical Islamic organizations, and maintain capacity for consequence management. It will also include those activities that serve to deter the enemy from utilizing WMD/E against the U.S. and U.S. interests.

The development of partner nation security forces consists of those actions taken by DoD, in support of the larger

U.S. government effort, to ensure that partner security forces, both regular and irregular, have the will, capacity, and capability to effectively conduct operations to defeat radical Islamic organizations. The United States' partners have the cultural and historical understanding that, when coupled with U.S. government technology, intelligence, and training, will allow them to execute operations within their borders that will defeat radical Islamic organizations. The potential capability of U.S. partners to fight radical Islamic organizations in their own territory could make this line of operation the decisive military effort in the campaign over time.

The Economic Development LLO consists of those DoD actions, as a part of a larger interagency effort, which stimulates partner nations' economic status in the global economy. Improving the economic conditions at the campaign's decisive point—the world's Muslim population in contested areas—will make radical Islamic organizations less appealing to people who have no hope of a stable life. In this line of operation the DoD can assist in attacking financial sources of support for radical Islamic organizations. Actions taken along this line of operation will identify the sources of support, the nature of support (active or tacit) and the means to deter those sources over time.

The next line of effort is drawn from the effort to advance democracies as outlined in the NSCT-06. The effort to develop global infrastructure for democracy consists of those DoD actions, as a part of a larger U.S. government effort, that improve partner nations' ability to govern in the framework of the rule of law. This is not an effort to spread American-style democracy throughout the world. This effort is focused on building partner nation legitimacy. Legitimacy cannot be bestowed by U.S. actions. Legitimacy must be obtained by responsible actions of the partner government. The U.S. supports partner nations by assisting in providing a secure and stable environment in which regional governments can develop.

The campaign framework's overarching effort will be Information Operations LLO which is nested to the nation's Strategic Communications plan. This

effort is directly linked to the president's War of Ideas as outlined in NSCT-06. This line of operation, as a part of a larger interagency effort, will erode legitimacy of radical Islamic ideology. These actions focus on neutralizing the ability of radical Islamic organizations to use an extremist interpretation of Islam to justify the use of terrorism in pursuit of their aims; isolating violent extremist organizations from the populations that provide them freedom of action and resources; and diminishing the underlying conditions to reduce the tacit and active support for violent extremists over time. Efforts should be focused on ideological vulnerabilities exploiting Islamic fault lines between Sunni and Shi'a, the hypocrisy of terrorism as a religiously approved tactic and the enemy's reliance on trust within clandestine networks.

Six Key Objectives

In the proposed campaign plan, the U.S. will have six key objectives. These campaign objectives will provide the results necessary to achieve measures of performance required for the specified termination criteria. The campaign objectives are:

1. Defeat radical Islamic organizations which are attacking the U.S. and its global interests.
2. Neutralize or contain other radical extremist organizations which interfere with U.S. efforts to defeat those who attack the U.S. and its global interests.
3. Block acquisition and/or use of WMD/E by radical Islamic organizations.
4. Support Foreign Internal Defense efforts for partner nations.
5. Support Security Assistance Operations for partner nations.
6. Support Humanitarian and Civic Assistance in contested regions.

A global counter-insurgency cannot succeed without the success of partner nations' internal security forces. These forces not only achieve tactical and operational successes against the enemy, but they provide strong legitimacy to their governments if they become respected institutions. Through Foreign Internal Defense (FID) efforts with partner nations, the United States can assist in the following ways: 1. defeat of radical Islamic organizations and networks in partner nations; 2). secure borders and transit zones thus assisting

in denying radical Islamic organizations of the resources they need to operate and survive; 3. provide a secure and stable environment for culturally and politically progressive Arab governments to govern, thus discrediting violent extremist ideology in the eyes of the world's Muslims. Priority of effort for FID and partnership operations should be in Iraq, Afghanistan, and then Jordan.

The U.S. was successful in shaping the global environment during the Cold War by assisting partner nations in their internal security efforts. By supporting Security Assistance Operations for partner nations, the U.S. builds the necessary capability and capacity for their security forces to function. Security Assistance refers to the group of programs that support national policies and objectives by providing defense material, military training and other defense related support to foreign nations by grants, loans, credit, or cash sales. Priority for these efforts should go to security forces in legitimate partner nations in the Middle East, the Horn of Africa, Sub-Sahara Africa, South Asia, Central Asia, and the Asian Littoral. Programs will include, but are not limited to, Foreign Military Sales, Foreign Military Financing, International Military Education and Training, the Economic Support Fund, and Arms Export Control-licensed commercial sales. The military can support these activities through military training teams, maintenance support personnel and training, and other related activities.

Humanitarian and Civic Assistance programs consist of assistance provided in conjunction with military operations and exercises. By law, they are authorized by the secretary of state, and planned and appropriated in the defense budget. These missions should focus on: 1. medical, dental, and veterinary care for rural areas of a country; 2. construction of rudimentary surface transportation systems; 3. well drilling and construction of basic sanitation facilities; 4. rudimentary construction and repair of public facilities; and 5). mine detection and clearance.

Based upon this analysis, the mission statement and commander's intent can be articulated. These are nested with

the national policy and strategy.

Mission

When directed, the Department of Defense in coordination with other governmental agencies and coalition partners conducts a global campaign to defeat radical Islamic organizations and networks which use terrorism to achieve their goals in order to preserve the way of life of free and open societies, and create a global environment unsupportive of extremist organizations which use terrorism.

Commander's Intent

Purpose: To preserve the way of life of free and open societies, and create a global environment unsupportive of extremist organizations which use terrorism.

Method: Our priority task is to defeat radical Islamic organizations and networks which use terrorism to achieve their goals. This is achieved through the simultaneous execution of the following supporting key tasks:

1. Defeat radical Islamic attacks against the U.S., its allies, and partners.
2. Isolate radical Islamic organizations from the resources needed to operate and survive. (Resources: leadership, foot soldiers, safe havens, weapons, funds, communications and movement, access to targets, and ideological support.)
3. Block WMD/E proliferation, and recover/ eliminate uncontrolled materials.
4. Support and enable partner nations to counter radical Islamic terror organizations.
5. Secure state and non-state support to counter radical Islamic terror organizations in coordination with other U.S. government agencies and partner nations.
6. Retain conditions that allow partner nations to govern their territory effectively and maintain a global anti-terrorist environment.

End State

The United States has preserved an environment of political, ideological and economic freedom across the globe. Partner nations govern their territories to prevent a resurgence of violent extremist organizations. Radical and violent Islamic ideology is discredited in the eyes of the world's Muslims.

This environment is measured by the following Termination Criteria:

1. Attacks against the U.S., its allies, and partners are defeated or interdicted.
2. Radical Islamic organizations are incapable or unwilling to attack the U.S., its allies, or interests.
3. Key leaders of radical Islamic organizations are killed or captured.
4. Enemy organizations and networks are denied possession of WMD/E.
5. Partner nations possess the capability and capacity to counter radical Islamic terror organizations within their territory—particularly in the Middle East, the Horn of Africa, Sub-Sahara Africa, South Asia, Central Asia, and the Asian Littoral.
6. Partner nations possess the capability and capacity to secure their borders and transit zones, to assist in denying enemy organizations the resources needed to operate and survive.
7. Partner nations possess a secure and stable environment to discredit violent extremist ideology in the eyes of the world's Muslims, and non-extremist models of moderation within the Muslim world have popular, vocal support.

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The GWOT has the characteristics of an insurgency: protracted, asymmetric and ambiguous political mobilization to alter the balance of global power.¹ Terrorism is a subset of this insurgency.² The United States' challenge is to ensure that national power is used within a strategy that fits the nature of the war and adversary. The ends will not change in a shift of strategy. What could change is the execution of a coherent theory of victory. A counter-insurgency strategy may appear counter-intuitive and challenge the dominant traditions of the American way of war, but it appears to be the United States' best strategy for success.³

Colonel Jim Johnson is an Infantry officer with 22 years of service. He is a recent graduate of the Naval War College. He

1 Steven Metz and Raymond Millen, *Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in the 21st Century: Reconceptualizing Threat and Response* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2004), p. 24.

2 David Kilcullen, "Countering Global Insurgency," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 28:4 (2005): p. 606.

3 Colin S. Gray, *Irregular Enemies and the Essence of Strategy: Can the American Way of War Adapt?* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2007), pp. 6-8.