

China's Marine Corps Adds Improved Light Tank with Capabilities in Varied Geographies

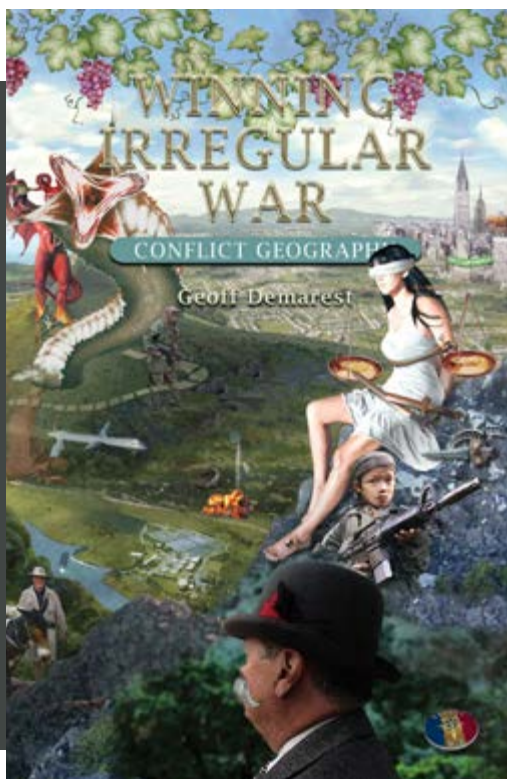
By Cindy Hurst
OE Watch Commentary

According to a recent announcement, China's ZTQ-15 new light tank has now made its way into the hands of the Marine Corps of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy. The ZTQ-15, which is touted as China's most capable light tank, first entered service in 2018 with the PLA Ground Forces. According to an article published by *China Daily*, website of China's official English-language newspaper, the ZTQ-15 will significantly "boost the Marine Corps' operational mobility and amphibious fighting capability." The article describes the Marine Corps' tank as more capable than other systems, such as the ZTD-05A amphibious assault vehicle and ZBD-05 amphibious fighting vehicle, with thicker armor, stronger firepower, and an improved propulsion system. Its engines are specially designed to handle less oxygen and a hydropneumatics suspension allows better maneuverability and survivability, including in mountainous conditions. The main weapon on the tank is a 105-millimeter caliber gun, "capable of firing shells and guided missiles powerful enough to destroy all kinds of tanks likely to confront the Chinese tank on plateaus." The highlighting of the mountains and plateaus is interesting given that these are not the amphibious conditions normally associated with the Marines primary mission, but do describe a great deal of Chinese geography internally and in bordering regions.

“Deployment of the ZTQ-15 will substantially boost the Marine Corps' operational mobility and amphibious fighting capability.”

Source: Zhao Lei, "New Light-Duty Tank Delivered to PLA Navy's Amphibious Force," *China Daily* (China's official English-language newspaper), 9 July 2021. <http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202107/09/WS60e7a425a310efa1bd660b96.html>

The main land weapons of the Marine Corps' armored force are currently the ZTD-05A amphibious assault vehicle and ZBD-05 amphibious fighting vehicle. Deployment of the ZTQ-15 will substantially boost the Marine Corps' operational mobility and amphibious fighting capability, said Wu Peixin, a military equipment observer in Beijing. "Compared with other ground-based weapons in the Marine Corps, the new tank has thicker armor, stronger firepower and an improved propulsion system, which means it is able to confront heavily armed enemies and can move through many kinds of tough terrain that other vehicles can't," he said. Yu Shuo, an industry observer of land weapons, said that despite its light weight, the highly mobile ZTQ-15 has good self-protection measures. The tank is equipped with specially designed engines that can handle the shortage of oxygen on plateaus and also features a hydropneumatic suspension system that ensures good maneuverability and survivability in mountainous regions. Its main weapon—a 105-millimeter-caliber gun—is able to fire shells and guided missiles powerful enough to destroy all kinds of tanks likely to confront the Chinese tank on plateaus, he said. the Marine Corps is an elite amphibious fighting force that shoulders significant responsibilities for safeguarding national sovereignty, territorial integrity, marine rights and overseas interests.



Geoff Demarest's *Winning Irregular War* is about a broader set of conflicts than just 'insurgency.' In its 144 sections, Geoff Demarest uses a distinct, reconciled, more effective strategic grammar that draws on the disciplines of law and geography over political science. As Geoff Demarest puts it: "I hope that some of the ideas in it will be contagious."

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