



# Red Diamond Threats Newsletter



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Analysis & Control Element Threats Integration

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## NEW SERIES OF THREAT TACTICS REPORTS COMING SOON

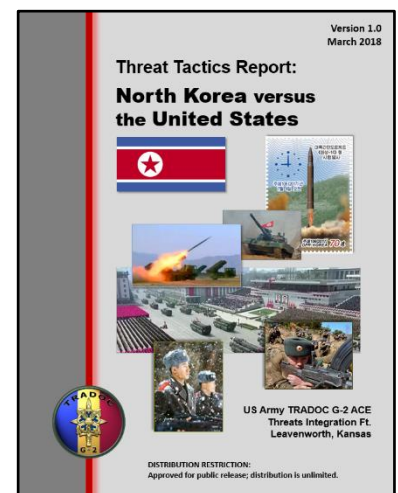
by [H. David Pendleton](#) (CGI CTR), TRADOC G-2 ACE Threats Integration

The TRADOC G-2 ACE Threats Integration (ACE-TI) team will soon begin releasing a series of Threat Tactics Reports (TTRs) on the most likely methods threat actors would use to fight American forces. The first release is "North Korea versus the United States," to be followed by similar products on Russia, China, and Iran. The intent of this TTR series is to illustrate how a threat actor would fight the US Army at the brigade combat team level, as opposed to how it would fight or is currently fighting a less-capable adversary.

While each TTR is unique to a particular threat actor, they will all follow a similar format. After providing a short background on the threat actor, three major sections follow:

- **Section 1** provides information on the type of maneuver brigade/division most commonly fielded by the threat actor. This section also includes a unit order of battle and a listing of its most numerous and/or dangerous weapons.
- **Section 2** gives a description of the threat actor's tactics and techniques as written in its doctrine and/or used in recent combat. The terms used in this section are those of the threat actor.
- **Section 3** addresses how the threat actor's maneuver brigade/division would fight the US in combat. Terms used in this section are primarily from the [Training Circular \(TC\) 7-100 series](#).

Each TTR, once published, will be available on the Army Training Network ([ATN](#)) and the All Partners Access Network ([APAN](#)). For questions about a particular TTR, contact the author listed for that product.



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# RED DIAMOND TOPICS OF INTEREST

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by TRADOC G-2 ACE Threats Integration

This issue of Red Diamond opens with an article on recent activity by al Shabaab in Somalia. Though it has been confined to the countryside, the group is still able to inflict damage by attacking military patrols, taking over small towns, and conducting suicide attacks. The article details two examples of how al Shabaab currently operates in Somalia: an attack on Bariire, a town that has seesawed back and forth between al Shabaab and government control; and a bombing in Mogadishu that involved an unsuccessful, but devastating, two-vehicle attack.

Russian UAV unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) cover a wide spectrum of operational capabilities. Current platforms weigh from a few pounds up to thousands of pounds, are capable of ranging from a few to hundreds of miles, and may reach altitudes approaching 30,000 feet. The next article, second in a series of country UAV assessments, provides a broad overview of Russia's UAV capabilities.

The 2017 peace accord between the Colombian Government and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) is an historic achievement. However, despite the FARC Secretariat's reconciliation overtures, the group's network will likely continue to plague the region. Past precedent and current trends indicate that the FARC will adapt in order to protect and expand its

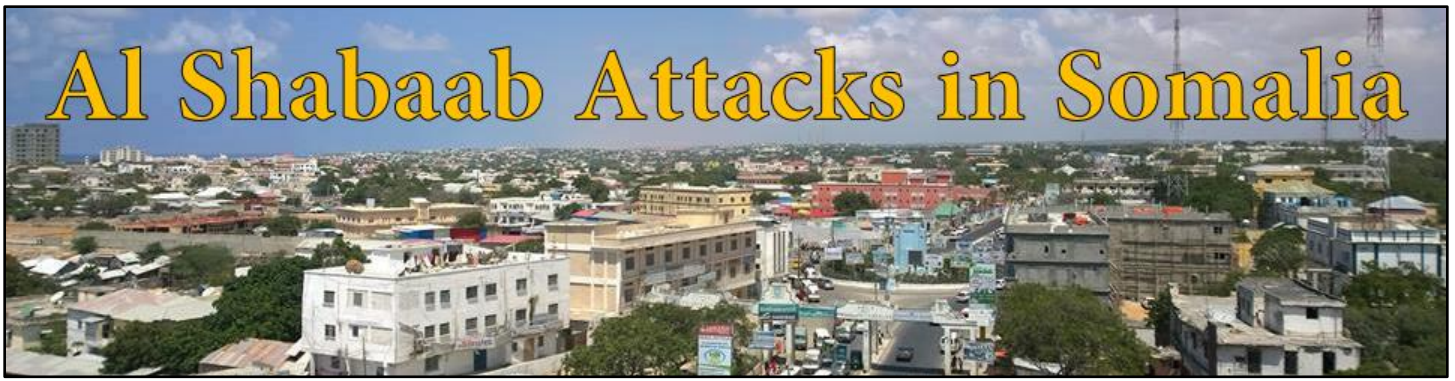
criminal enterprise and regenerate its influence. The third article reviews the group's history as a hybrid threat, examines its likely evolution, and considers the implications for Colombia's government.

Megacities—cities with populations of at least ten million—are an anticipated operational environment of the future. While each has its own unique characteristics, metropolitan Manila exhibits three conditions that might be generalizable to other megacities around the world: massive population growth and urban challenges, local governance challenges, and national economic hub vulnerability. An article discusses these primary issues and considers their potential impact on the operational environment.

One of the themes presented in analyses of North Korea and any future Korean war is that of fanaticism. It is often presented as ubiquitous, positing a North Korean people prepared to fight to the death. History, however, shows that armies and populations under severe autocratic regimes rarely fight "to the last man"; instead, these wars tend to transition rapidly from high-intensity combat to significant humanitarian crises. The final article offers a different view of fanaticism in North Korea, proposes a possible scenario of joint operations following open conflict, and presents applicable training implications for friendly forces.

## ***Red Diamond Disclaimer***

**The *Red Diamond* newsletter presents professional information but the views expressed herein are those of the authors, not the Department of Defense or its elements. The content does not necessarily reflect the official US Army position and does not change or supersede any information in other official US Army publications. Authors are responsible for the accuracy and source documentation of material that they reference. The *Red Diamond* staff reserves the right to edit material. Appearance of external hyperlinks does not constitute endorsement by the US Army for information contained therein.**



by [Rick Burns](#), TRADOC G-2 ACE Threats Integration (BMA CTR)

With the recent devastating Islamic State Iraq and Syria (ISIS) losses in both Iraq and Syria, Africa is poised to become a safe haven and a new battlefield for fighters returning from the Middle East. Africa's increasing and improving telecommunications infrastructure and fragile governments offer an inviting operational environment. ISIS has forged relationships with Nigeria's Boko Haram in the past and has reached out to some factions within Somalia's al Shabaab, an al-Qaeda affiliate. This will bring more attention to the African continent in the coming years.<sup>1</sup>

One of the leading African insurgent organizations is the regionally focused al Shabaab. Founded between 2004 and 2006 in Somalia in the midst of that nation's fifteen-year civil war, al Shabaab continues to threaten democratic governance in the region. The group intends to form a radical Islamist government in the Horn of Africa. To that end, it has carried out attacks across east Africa, to include the September 2013 attack on a shopping center in Kenya's capital city, Nairobi, that left 60 people dead.<sup>2</sup>

Pressures from the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and Somali National Army (SNA) soldiers and targeted attacks by the US military have pushed al Shabaab out of Somalia's capital city, Mogadishu, and into Somalia's outer-lying areas. Though it has been confined to the countryside, al Shabaab is still able to inflict damage by attacking AMISOM and SNA soldiers on patrols, taking over small towns, and conducting suicide attacks inside Mogadishu. While more limited in its maneuverability, al Shabaab threatens democratic governance in Somalia as people lose faith in the government's capacity to protect them from violent attacks.<sup>3</sup>

The following are two examples of how al Shabaab operates in Somalia. The first example is an attack on Bariire, a town that has seesawed back and forth between SNA and al Shabaab control. The second is a bombing attack in Mogadishu involving a two-vehicle attack—one successfully caught at a security checkpoint and the second a failure, but with devastating consequences.

#### **Bariire Attack**

Located a mere 31 miles from Mogadishu, the town of Bariire has been used as an al Shabaab departure point for attacks on the capital city. Since being pushed out of Mogadishu, the group has attempted to control the outlying areas that are difficult for the Somali and foreign military forces to hold. In response, these villages and towns have been targeted by SNA and AMISOM troops to minimize al Shabaab's effectiveness. In August 2017, SNA soldiers and their foreign allies attacked and occupied Bariire, resulting in civilian casualties and complaints from local members of the community. The foreign forces supporting the Somali government that were involved in the attack became the target of much of the protests.<sup>4</sup>

On 29 September 2017, al Shabaab retook the city. Abdiasis Abu Musab, al Shabaab's military operations spokesman, claimed the attack began after morning prayers with suicide vehicle-borne attacks. Local witnesses claimed to have heard two blasts followed by gunfire, leading to the conclusion that al Shabaab utilized at least two suicide bombers. The fighters attacked from three directions—south, north, and east. The SNA regional commander, Shegow Ahmed, stated that the SNA held the militants at bay for several hours until the al Shabaab fighters rammed the fortifications with the suicide vehicle-borne attacks. This seeming contradiction in the order of events between al Shabaab's Musab and SNA's Ahmed may be due to second-hand accounts of the attack or there may have been initial small-arms fire preceding the truck bomb attacks, followed by a larger attack. The al Shabaab fighters prevailed and forced the SNA soldiers to withdraw.



under pressure into the wooded areas surrounding the city, leaving al Shabaab in control of the city once again. The group claimed to have also taken several vehicles with attached weapons, which the SNA denied.<sup>5</sup>

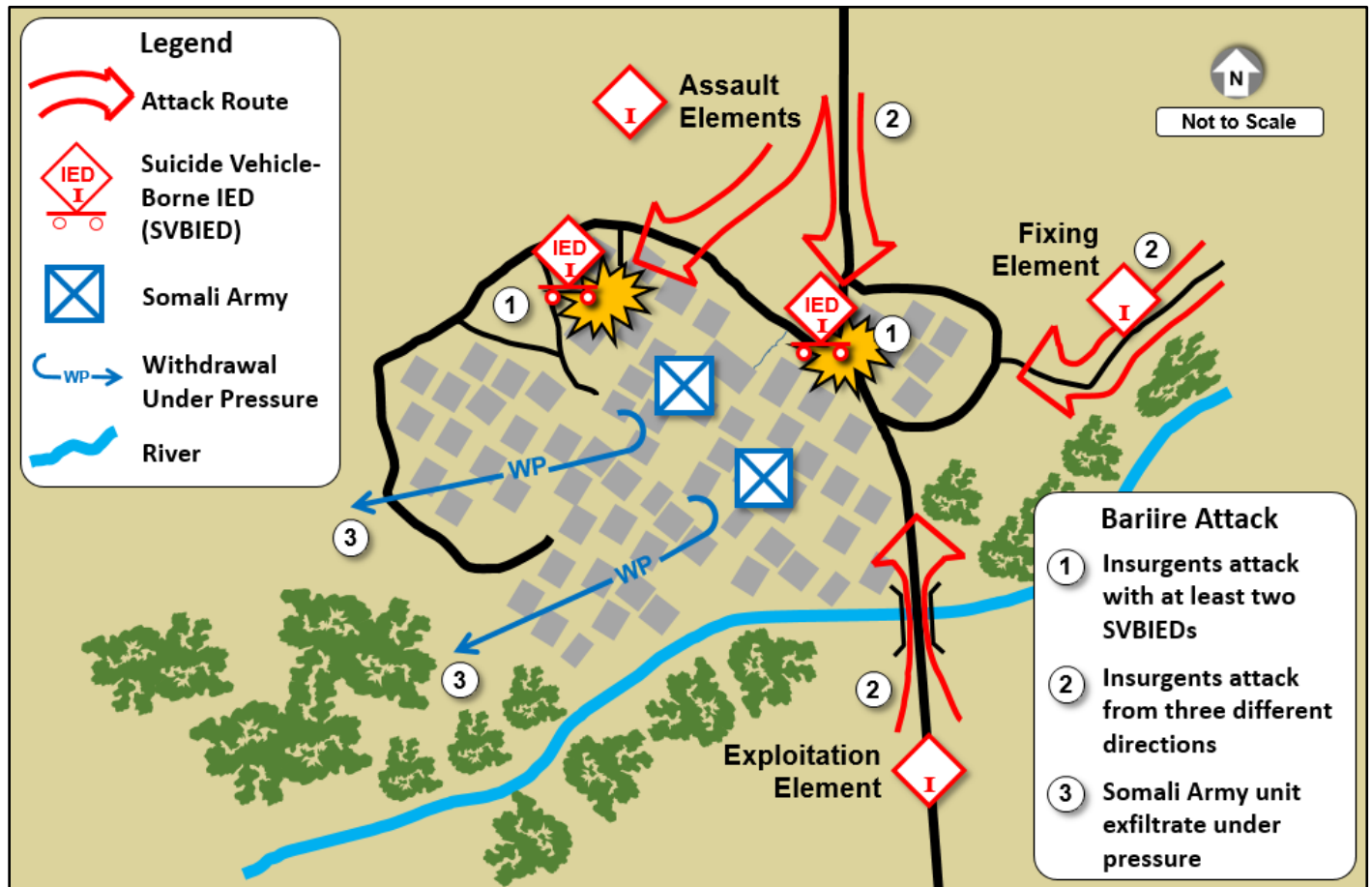


Figure 1. Al Shabaab Bariire Attack

### Mogadishu Attack

On 16 October 2017, after having successfully negotiated several checkpoints where it is suspected that he had help, the driver of an explosives-laden truck stopped at a security checkpoint along one of the busiest routes in Mogadishu. The area surrounding the attack route is a busy business and market district. As the truck arrived at the checkpoint, it became clear to the driver that security personnel intended to inspect it. Before the truck could be examined, however, the driver sped through the checkpoint. Shortly after lunging forward, the truck's combination of military-grade and homemade explosives detonated, either accidentally or on purpose. The blast set off another massive detonation when a nearby oil tanker caught fire in front of the Safari Hotel. The resulting explosion killed an estimated 300 people, injured hundreds more, and caused damage to the surrounding structures.<sup>6</sup>

Prior to the explosion in front of the Safari Hotel, security personnel had stopped a van in the vicinity of the Medina Gate entrance to the Somali Airport and discovered a lesser amount of explosives. The arrested individual revealed the details of the two-vehicle operation. The driver of the van was to first ram the Medina Gate, opening the way for the second driver to enter the airport and detonate his truck with the larger payload. The van driver also connected the Bariire attack with this operation.<sup>7</sup> The driver of the truck came from Bariire and had defected from the SNA to join al Shabaab some years before. It is believed that the Mogadishu bombing was, at least in the mind of the truck driver, a revenge attack. Investigators established that both vehicles had come from Bariire and believe local tribal leaders had called for the revenge attack.<sup>8</sup>

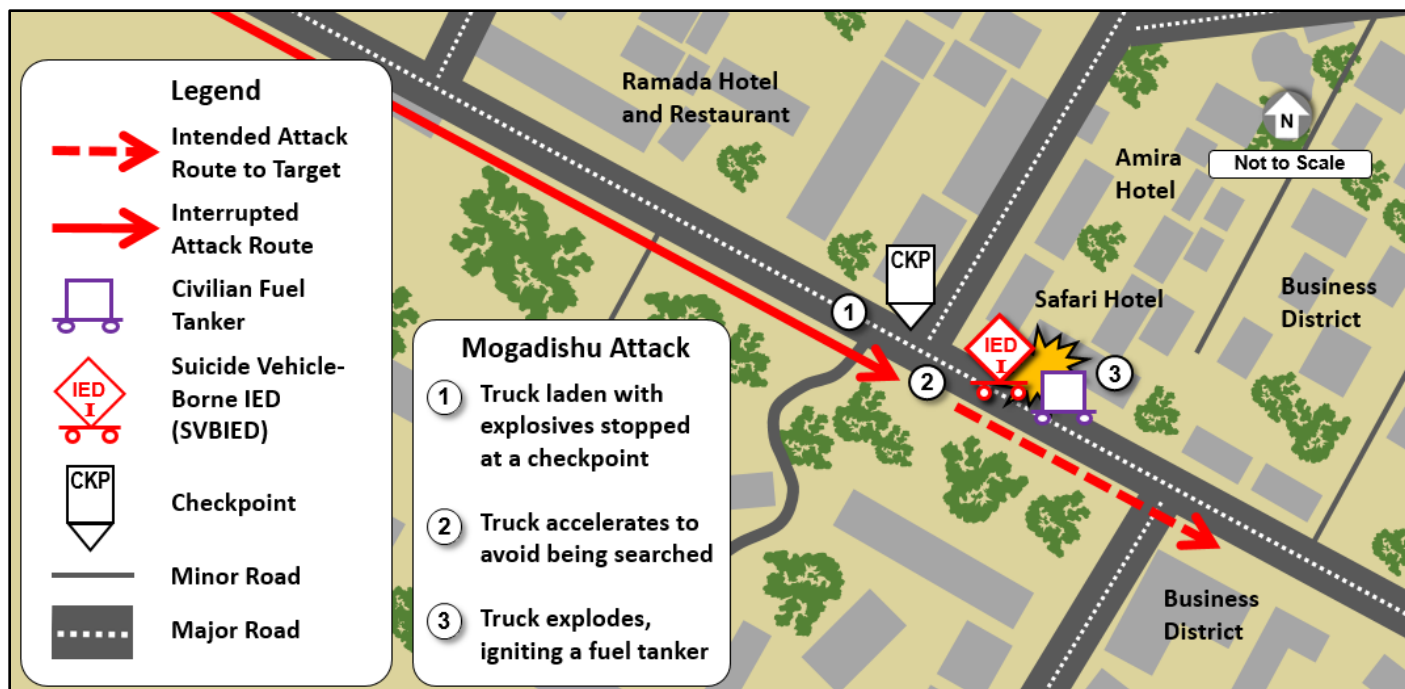


Figure 2. Mogadishu Attack



Figure 3. Mogadishu Attack Aftermath

### Improvised Explosive Devices

A cause for concern is the availability of explosives and the effectiveness of al Shabaab's improvised explosive device (IED) attacks. The group has become very proficient at using locally-sourced explosives. A recent IED assessment found that about 60 percent of the explosives used by al Shabaab came from Kenyan air-dropped munitions and captured AMISON supplies.<sup>9</sup> It does not exhibit particular sophistication with its IED construction. Recovered IEDs show that they are made with crude triggers, saw blades for pressure plates, and rocker switches similar to those used in houses to turn the lights on and off.<sup>10</sup> In the absence of sophisticated technology, al Shabaab has refined its techniques. Attacks on SNA and AMISOM patrols include prepositioning of IEDs to optimize the kill zone, where small arms and rocket-propelled grenade

fire are utilized. To protect its camps, the group uses multiple IEDs that are either daisy-chained or spread over an area and detonated separately. A third usage, described in both the Bariire attack and the Mogadishu bombing, involves sending a first suicide vehicle-borne IED into a perimeter to break through the security, followed by a second vehicle or fighters who then exploit the breach.<sup>11</sup>

## Conclusion and Implications for Training

It is clear that al Shabaab is able to adapt to a changing operational environment. Even as it has lost control of areas within Mogadishu, al Shabaab continues to utilize the advantages it has in rural areas, occupying strategic towns and villages from which it can attack SNA and AMISOM patrols and conduct bombing operations within Mogadishu. By coopting and creating narratives that exploit anti-government sentiments, al Shabaab increases its credibility and capacity in areas that are difficult for the SNA and foreign military forces to control. The group exploited feelings within the town of Bariire to its advantage in recruiting one of its own to carry out a revenge bombing. Insurgents and terrorists often have inherent information operation advantages by virtue of their closer proximity to the people and capacity to shape a narrative quickly.

Security checkpoints are problematic. They are inherently disruptive to normal civilian activities and prone to corruption. In the case of the van, a checkpoint prevented infrastructure damage and loss of life. The truck, on the other hand, got within less than a mile of its target after maneuvering through several checkpoints. Either through negligence or complicity, security personnel failed to detect the driver's cargo and his intentions. The final checkpoint could have stopped the driver through its inspection, but inadequate physical restraints allowed him to lunge forward and detonate the explosives in his truck, either accidentally or intentionally.

Even without a high degree of sophistication, opposing forces can reap great benefit from using effective techniques. Well-positioned IEDs, complex attacks, effective information operations, and exploitation of corruption are all ways to overcome technological deficits. [Training Circular 7-100.2, Opposing Force Tactics](#) and [Training Circular 7-100.3, Irregular Opposing Forces](#) are resources that describe how an opposing force will fight.

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# UNMANNED AERIAL VEHICLE ASSESSMENT: RUSSIA



by [Nicole Bier](#) (DAC) and [Patrick Madden](#) (BMA CTR), TRADOC G-2 ACE Threats Integration

*This is the second article in a series of country unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) assessments based exclusively on open-source information. The first article, about North Korean UAVs, was published in October 2017. This article provides a broad overview of Russia's UAV capabilities. The next article in this series will cover Iranian UAVs.*

The current array of Russian UAVs—tactical and below—indicates a military force preparing for a close fight. Russia has a UAV density advantage at brigade and lower echelons in its current conflicts. These aircraft are used for reconnaissance and forward observation, as well as target acquisition (TA) and battle damage assessment. Hundreds of these UAVs fill its military inventory, with the number of organically manufactured UAVs increasing annually.<sup>1</sup> The following information provides an overview of the country's UAV capabilities.

Russia has vertical take-off and landing (VTOL) UAVs such as the Russian Gorizont Air S-100, which can be launched from a ground vehicle or vessel and is based on the Austrian CamCopter S-100 by Schiebel. The Russian military is quickly increasing its UAV inventory with updated TA platforms, such as the Tu-243 and Tu-300, each weighing a few thousand pounds. Both the Tu-243 and Tu-300 are based on the decades-old Tu-141/Tu-143 strike UAV that has a 13 minute endurance.<sup>2</sup> The Tu-141/Tu-143 was recently used in Ukraine, in direct support of Russian-backed separatists in the Donetsk area.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, Russia provides mini Eleron UAVs to the Donetsk area and the Syrian military. The Syrian military also receives larger UAVs from Russia, such as the Forpost.<sup>4</sup> Russia is improving its lightweight strike-capable UAVs such as the T-16, which weighs only 44 pounds.<sup>5</sup> Another example of a Russian tactical reconnaissance UAV that is easy to use, convenient, flexible, and mobile is the 154-pound Tipchak UAV that can be fired from a 300mm Smerch multiple-launch rocket system and is capable of conducting intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, and TA.<sup>6</sup>

Russia's current UAVs weigh anywhere from a few pounds to a few hundred pounds, with multiple variants per type. For example, there are at least four types of Elerons, six types of Granats, 19 types of Zalas, five types of Dozors, and six types of Orlans.<sup>7</sup> This variety of UAV type and variant offers a wide spectrum of operational capabilities. Range capabilities of the Russian UAV fleets vary from a few miles to a few hundred miles, with altitude ceilings of a few hundred feet to almost 30,000 feet.

Some Russian UAVs have more than one primary manufacturer, resulting in different names for similar airframes. For instance, there is a Grusha UAV built by a small Russian aircraft company, which is based on the Granat-1 UAV that is manufactured by Kalashnikov—one of the largest Russian manufacturing companies, which also produces small arms, artillery projectiles, and precision-guided munitions. Also manufactured by Kalashnikov is the Granat-4 UAV, and the Rubezh-20 UAV (similar to the Granat-4) is built by another small Russian aircraft company. Other prevalent UAVs, such as the Pchela-1T and Zastava, are referred to by different names as well. The Pchela-1T is also known as the Shmel/Shmel-1, and the Zastava is also known as the Navodchik-2. The Zastava looks very similar to the Israeli Bird Eye 400. The wide variety of names, types, and variants makes analysis of Russian UAVs complicated and requires extra diligence.

## Assessment

Russia will continue to upgrade its UAV inventory with domestically and externally produced systems. Most of these are compatible with Global Positioning System and/or Russia's Global Navigation Satellite System, resulting in challenges for US and friendly forces when conducting electronic warfare on Russian UAVs.<sup>8</sup> It is assessed that Russia will fill its nano UAV gap with domestically developed systems by 2020. Nano UAVs are significantly lighter than micro UAVs, typically weigh a few ounces or less, are normally equipped with cameras, and have an operational endurance of a few minutes to



approximately 20 minutes. Nano and micro UAVs are suitable for Russian Special Forces (*Spetsnaz*) and ground units. As it stands, Russian Special Forces and ground units have already employed micro UAVs, such as Zala variants.

Russia will continue to improve the Zala 421-16E5 UAV or manufacture another Zala 421-16E variant. The Zala 421-16E5 can defeat enemy electronic warfare attacks, has a range greater than 300-miles in certain settings, and has an endurance of seven hours.<sup>9</sup> As for unconventional UAV systems, Russia will continue to improve its Leer-3 UAV complex used to disable cellular networks. This system includes three Orlan-10 UAVs and a KamAZ-5350 truck, and was used in Syria.<sup>10</sup>

Russia has quickly modernized its UAV inventory within the last decade through rapid acquisitions. During 2013–2014, the Russian company ENICS JSC produced 34 Eleron-3SV UAVs and associated equipment in approximately 12 months.<sup>11</sup> ENICS JSC now claims its production facilities can manufacture over 100 micro and mini UAVs per year.<sup>12</sup> With Russia's quickly evolving UAV-manufacturing schedule, it is assessed that the country will continue to add to its medium altitude long-endurance (MALE) UAV class with Israeli systems. For instance, the Russian Forpost UAV is based on the Israeli Searcher II platform and is quickly filling Russia's UAV inventory. The Forpost MALE UAV weighs 1,100 pounds (approximately half the weight of a US-made Gray Eagle), has an operational endurance of at least 20 hours, and can carry up to a 150-pound payload.<sup>13</sup> Future Russian MALE UAVs, such as the Altius-M, are expected to be larger in size and much more capable, almost comparable to the US-made Reaper. The more-lethal Reaper weighs just under 11,000 pounds and can carry up to a 3,850-pound payload.<sup>14</sup> The Altius-M should be completed by 2019.<sup>15</sup>

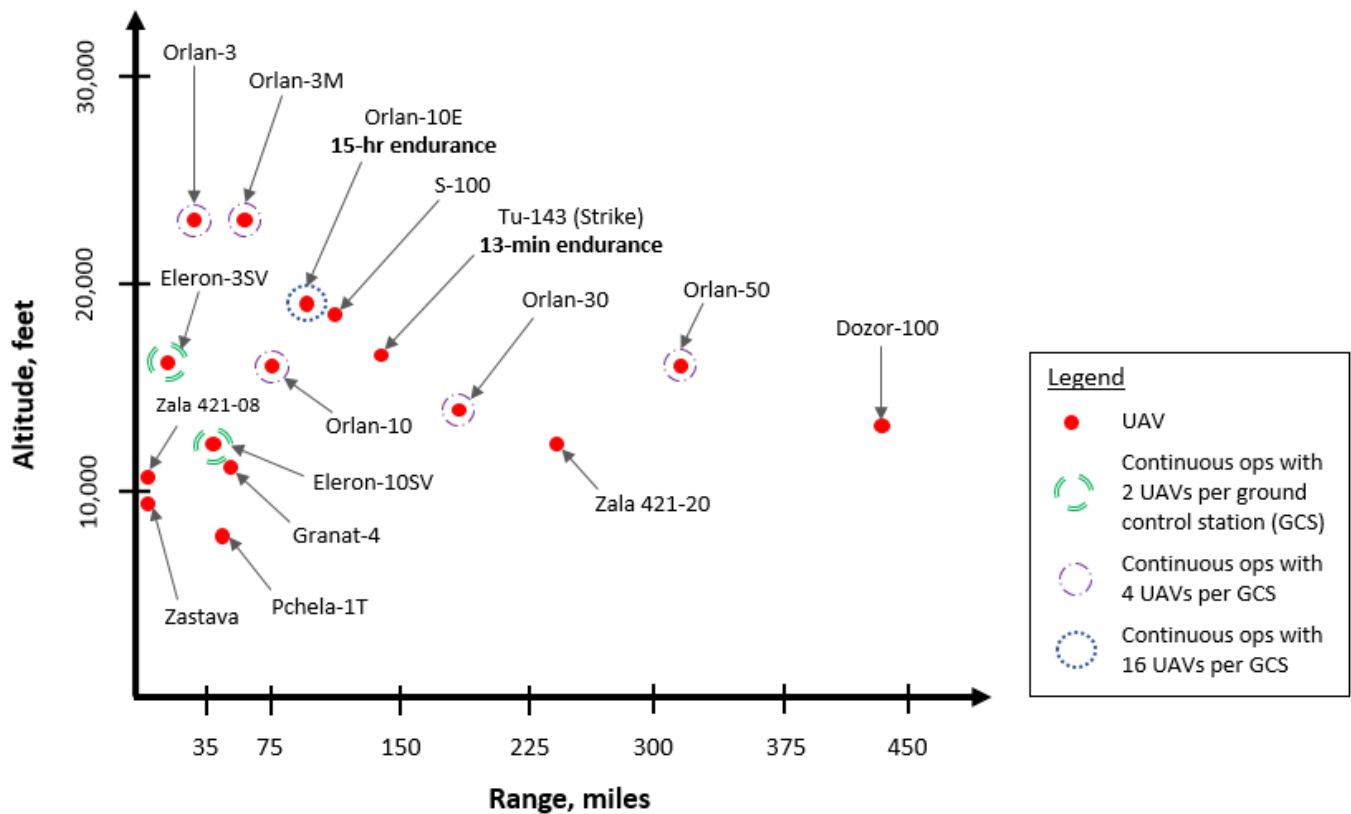
## Conclusion

Because of Russia's rapid acquisition of UAVs since the end of the 2008 conflict with Georgia, a significant number of UAVs discussed in this article were developed after 2008. Russia's quick production and fielding of UAVs—especially the more affordable, tactical platforms—is resulting in exponential growth in its UAV inventory and in the country's direct support of UAVs to the Donetsk area and Syria.

The chart below depicts approximately one-third of Russia's UAV fleet. Note the high density of UAVs at the lower echelons. Additionally, UAV ranges are not combat radii; they are based on ideal weather conditions and relatively level terrain. Some platforms are capable of simultaneous operations, where more than one aircraft can be controlled by the same ground control station (GCS). In these cases, UAVs are typically scheduled in sequence, with at least one aircraft over the target area at any given time, thus allowing operators to continue operations with multiple aircraft in a heel-toe set-up. A special note is that some of these UAVs can withstand temperatures ranging as low as -40° Fahrenheit and as high as 131° Fahrenheit, which is not uncommon for the country's military arms and munitions.<sup>16</sup>

**Table 1. Parametric Data for Select Russian UAVs**

UAV	Maximum Gross Take-Off Weight	Maximum Altitude (ft)	Range (miles)	Endurance (hours)	Simultaneous Ops (Yes/No)
Dozor-100	287	13,123	435	6	No
Eleron-3SV	12	16,400	16	1.67	Yes, 2 per GCS
Eleron-10SV	34	13,123	37	2.5	Yes, 2 per GCS
Gorizont Air S-100	440	18,000	112	6	No
Granat-4 /Rubezh-20	66	11,500	44	6	No
Orlan-3	12	23,000	31	2	Yes, 4 per GCS
Orlan-3M	15	23,000	62	3	Yes, 4 per GCS
Orlan-10	31–40	16,404	75	4	Yes, 4 per GCS
Orlan-10E	40	19,685	93	15	Yes, 16 per GCS
Orlan-30	60	14,764	186	5	Yes, 4 per GCS
Orlan-50	110	16,400	310	8	Assessed Yes, 4 per GCS
Pchela-1T/Shmel-1T	304	8,200	37	2	No
Tu-143 (Strike)	2,712	16,400	125	*13 minutes*	No
Zala 421-08	5	11,811	6	1.5	No
Zala 421-20	440	12,139	248	8	No
Zastava /Navodchik-2	12	9,842	6	1	No



**Figure 1. Characteristics of Select Russian Tactical/Lower MALE UAVs**

Below are pictures of Russian UAVs. Note that one UAV fleet can span from micro to higher-end tactical and/or lower-end MALE UAVs.



**Figure 2. Eleron-3 (top left), Eleron-3SV (top right), Eleron-10 (bottom left), and Eleron-10SV (bottom right)**



Figure 3. Granat-1 (left), Granat-2 (right), and Granat-4 (bottom)



Figure 4. Two different pictures of the Orlan-10



Figure 5. Pchela-1T





**Figure 6. Zala 421-08 (left) and Zala 421-20 (right)**

*Parametric data provided in Table 1 and Figure 1 portray current information from reputable commercial open sources, and this data will be included in the next update of the Worldwide Equipment Guide (WEG). Due to the evolving nature of unmanned aircraft, capabilities change and new variants are produced regularly. Additionally, the WEG introduces UAV parametric information according to the International Systems of Units, whereas this article provides UAV parametric information according to the US measurement system for convenience.*

#### Figure & Table Credits

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by [Scott Moreland](#), Program Manager, Security Cooperation Studies and Exercises Program, Center for Civil-Military Relations, Naval Postgraduate School

The 2017 peace accord between the Colombian Government and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia, or FARC, is an historic achievement that must be reinforced by defense sector readiness. Despite the FARC Secretariat's reconciliation overtures, the FARC and its network is a hybrid threat that is likely to continue to plague the region. Past precedent and current trends indicate that the FARC will either evolve or entirely re-invent itself in order to protect and expand its criminal enterprise and regenerate its influence in the region.

### **The FARC and Hybrid Threats**

Colombia is at an historic crossroad. After four years of dialogue, a ceasefire agreement was signed on 23 June 2016 between the Colombian government and the Fuerzas Armada Revolucionarios de Colombia. The ceasefire offers hope for an end to what has long seemed an intractable internal conflict.

Even as the political leaders pursue peace and reconciliation, the defense sector must recognize the FARC as a hybrid threat in transition. Early evidence suggests that the FARC will adapt in the short term, with an aim to regain a measure of popular support, protect and expand its lucrative and sprawling drug trafficking enterprise, and reconstitute a paramilitary capability. The latter is likely to manifest as a hybrid cellular network of affiliates that includes insurgent and terrorist ideologues, opportunistic and violent criminal gangs, and possibly even former military leaders from vulnerable states such as Venezuela and Nicaragua. Colombia's defense forces must remain vigilant against this hybrid threat in order to provide lasting and legitimate security for all of its citizens.

While certainly momentous, the FARC's willing transition from an active insurgency to a valid political party is not unprecedented. In recent history, groups as varied as the Basque region's Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA) and the Irish Republican Army (IRA) have successfully laid down arms and worked to establish a legitimate political voice within existing government frameworks. More recently, the erstwhile terrorist organization, Hezbollah, is exploring a path to disarmament as it aspires to a more mainstream role in Lebanon's political structure. Indeed, the self-proclaimed "Party of God" already occupies 23 seats in the Lebanese Parliament and its military wing is working closely with the Lebanese military to counter the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).<sup>1</sup> Hezbollah's potential evolution towards a viable and official stakeholder in Lebanese governance provides one relevant case with lessons that might be applied to the FARC's transition.

Hezbollah has frequently been characterized as a *hybrid threat* actor. Hybrid threats are broadly recognized as an emerging category of threats possessing distinct attributes and capabilities that set them apart from traditional insurgent or terrorist groups. Hybrid threats are distinguished by their extra-regional influence and their access to high-end military and information warfare capabilities. The US Army describes hybrid threats as a "diverse and dynamic combination of regular forces, irregular forces, and/or criminal elements all unified to achieve mutually benefiting effects."<sup>2</sup> The Army's definition appears to be influenced by Frank Hoffman's description of Hezbollah as a "hybrid threat" in the wake of the 2006 Second Lebanon War. Hoffman was among the first to propose a set of hybrid threat characteristics. Based on analysis of Hoffman's work and evolving hybrid threat features, a set of recurring and relevant hybrid threat attributes emerges:

- *Blended Tactics.* Hybrid threats combine conventional military capabilities with small-unit guerrilla tactics, asymmetric attacks, and mobile standoff engagement systems.



- *Flexible structures.* Hybrid threats are generally composed of paramilitary-type forces that can organize both in conventional military formations and as small, distributed cells. Hybrid threats create a governance component to establish stability and sustain operations.
- *Terrorism.* Hybrid threats utilize terror campaigns to proliferate hate and despair and to strike fear in adversaries.
- *Disregard for international law.* Hybrid threats cynically view international laws as a constraint upon their adversaries that can be exploited.
- *Information warfare.* Hybrid threats exploit information networks to promote ideological messages, spread misinformation, raise funds, recruit fighters, and operate covertly.
- *Organized criminal activity.* Hybrid threats use crime and fundraising as reliable sources of revenue to fight, train, recruit, govern, and sustain operations.

It is important to note that many of these attributes infer an unstable set of security conditions wherein hybrid threats thrive. Generally, hybrid threats will seek spaces where they can act with impunity, where governance is limited or non-existent, and where a committed and capable conventional response is unlikely. Hybrid threats will also tend to prefer to operate obliquely and achieve their aims below the threshold of open conflict until such time as they can confidently exploit a conventionally disadvantaged or constrained adversary. This set of hybrid threat attributes and operational conditions has been applied to Hezbollah in Lebanon in previous studies, but it might just as easily pertain to the FARC as it has evolved over the last 60 years in the Colombian hinterland.<sup>3</sup>

The FARC emerged in 1966 as a traditional guerilla army pursuing a communist ideology. In its early years, the FARC garnered support and a recruiting base from remote villagers who felt disenfranchised by Colombia's central government. The FARC provided educational and medical services to loyal communities, and received a steady flow of recruits for its militant training camps in return.

Initially, the FARC preferred time-honored guerilla tactics, especially kidnapping. Then, as it became more heavily involved in cocaine trafficking throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the FARC enjoyed a massive influx of revenue that allowed it to expand exponentially. By the mid-1990s, the FARC had grown into a formidable military force, fielding 27 battalions of militant fighters. From 1996 to 1998, the FARC launched a major military offensive, defeating the Colombian National Army in several battles. The offensive culminated with the overthrow of a military base in Las Delicias, where the FARC took dozens of Colombian troops hostage.<sup>4</sup> At the height of its power in 1999, the FARC was estimated to comprise over 18,000 active members.

In response to the FARC's alarming growth and shocking series of military attacks, high-profile kidnappings, and murders, in 1999 Colombia partnered with the United States to initiate Plan Colombia. The plan included a massive \$9 billion military aid package that made it possible for Colombia's newly modernized and well-trained military and police forces to launch an offensive of their own. Under President Uribe, defense forces cracked down heavily on the FARC, and within a decade the guerilla force was reduced by almost two-thirds to about 7,000 active members.<sup>5</sup>

The FARC exemplifies all of the characteristics of a hybrid threat. This classification is important because it may lend insights into how the FARC might evolve and adapt during the current transition. If analyzed according to the common hybrid threat features, historical trends and future possibilities emerge.

*The FARC will devolve into loosely affiliated, regionally distributed cells: Blended tactics, flexible structures*

As the FARC Secretariat officially negotiates peace in Colombia, proxy groups are gaining power and influence throughout the region, mostly via criminal affiliates. The Jalisco New Generation Cartel (CJNG), also known as the Mata Zetas or Zeta Killers, is just one FARC-trained narco-terror group gaining notoriety in Mexico. According to a leaked document from Mexico's intelligence service, CJNG is eagerly recruiting former FARC terrorists in an effort to capitalize on their expertise with improvised explosives and guerilla tactics. Former FARC operatives have helped the CJNG rise to become the most powerful narco-trafficking faction in Mexico. The cartel brashly engages in firefights with military forces, and has even shot down military helicopters.<sup>6</sup>

The FARC has also heavily infiltrated the Venezuelan military at the highest levels. Known as "Cartel of the Suns" after the insignia of Venezuelan generals, military handlers manage cocaine transactions throughout the region. In 2008, the US froze the assets of three Venezuelan generals who were known associates of the FARC narco-trafficking syndicate.<sup>7</sup> As

Venezuela falls further into chaos, it provides an attractive sanctuary for former FARC operatives who may not support the peace process. It seems likely that as the FARC's central authority, or Secretariat, moves towards disarmament, splinter groups will continue to perpetuate violence and protect criminal interests.

*IED and terrorist attacks by the FARC are likely to continue: Terrorism, blended tactics*

Weakened militant groups frequently transition to guerrilla tactics, and the FARC is no exception. Following the Uribe administration's crackdown from 2002 through 2010, the FARC launched a renewed series of kidnappings and also deployed improvised explosive devices (IEDs) as a new weapon of choice. IED attacks accounted for a total of 707 casualties in Colombia in 2013 alone.<sup>8</sup> This transition toward a preference for IED attacks is alarming when taken in the context of hybrid-threat adaptations. IEDs are difficult to attribute, which allows for ambiguous attacks to continue in the midst of peace negotiations. Moreover, bomb-making materials might well be overlooked during the FARC disarmament process and are, at any rate, readily available.

As the FARC and the Colombian government continue on the path toward peace, defense and intelligence authorities should consider the probability of continued IED and terror attacks by clandestine operatives or criminal affiliates. Indeed, unconfirmed accounts indicate that the FARC is already exploiting the obscurity of these attacks to violate the ceasefire agreement. For example, a Colombian police checkpoint in an important FARC drug-trafficking corridor in northern Colombia was targeted with a command-detonated IED in July 2015. Police concluded that it was "mostly likely" that the attack was orchestrated by the FARC's 36th Front.<sup>9</sup> More recently, a criminal affiliate known as the First Front of the FARC is suspected to have assassinated a 22-year-old university student and Barranquillita mayoral office intern in the Guaviare district on 13 September 2017.<sup>10</sup>

*The FARC's vast criminal enterprise casts doubt on peaceful overtures: Criminal activity, disregard for international law*

Non-state hybrid threats usually profess a counter-culture philosophy, but must rely on sponsorship and crime to fund their movements. In many cases, the vast revenues generated by the criminal enterprise begin to take precedence over ideological pursuits. Many Western analysts would categorize today's FARC more as an organized criminal syndicate than the sociopolitical communist insurgency upon which it was founded. Even the highest-ranking FARC leaders acknowledge this reality. Carlos Antonio Lozada, the youngest member of the FARC's seven-member Secretariat, is the UN-appointed FARC representative responsible for negotiating the peace accord. In an interview with the *New Yorker*, Lozada described his former work for the FARC as "financial and military," hinting vaguely at his role in managing FARC revenues primarily derived from cocaine trafficking, kidnapping, and extortion. Although Lozada is pushing for an ambitious reintegration program for former FARC combatants, he is surprisingly frank about the prospects of turning erstwhile drug runners into productive citizens. As Lozada himself confesses, "Unless they have a very strong ideological understanding, some will be vulnerable to the appeal of the narco world."<sup>11</sup>

FARC leaders have been careful to avoid any promises to dismantle their extensive drug-trafficking network. Even if the Secretariat desired to renounce the drug trade, it would be unlikely to persuade its lieutenants within Colombia, much less regional cells in Venezuela, Mexico, and Brazil. FARC regional commands may even cooperate or merge with former adversaries and competitors, including National Liberation Army guerrillas, *bandas criminales* (BACRIM), and the Urabeños. Indeed, it appears that a new underground network led by FARC regional commands is ambitiously engaged in arms thefts, drug trafficking, forced recruitment, and murder, even as the FARC's leadership negotiates reconciliation terms. This past summer, the Colombian navy intercepted over two tons of marijuana in Caquetá district. In July, security forces in Meta district uncovered a dissident cell comprised of former FARC 7th Front leaders carrying out extortions, IED attacks, and forced recruitment of child soldiers in an effort to consolidate their control over key drug-trafficking corridors leading to Venezuela and Brazil.<sup>12</sup>

**Implications for Colombia's Defense and Security Forces**

Having orchestrated a successful decade-long offensive that greatly reduced the FARC's conventional military capacity, the Colombian Armed Forces are in the midst of re-aligning their priorities and considering their future capability requirements. It is important at this juncture to sustain a high state of readiness, with an aim to deter and prevent a reconstitution of the FARC or the emergence of a similarly empowered dissident faction to fill the current power vacuum. Colombia's highly capable and professional defense and police forces must sustain their momentum and establish a viable

long-term, legitimate security environment for Colombia's citizens. There are several key tasks that will be essential to ensuring the FARC stays on the back foot, while solidifying government gains:

1. *Enhance regional intelligence cooperation.* The FARC criminal network is spread throughout the region. It is essential that affected nations, especially Brazil and Mexico, harmonize their intelligence and operations to counter the FARC and other regionally distributed criminal syndicate operations.
2. *Sustain robust surveillance.* Colombia should sustain and expand security surveillance and enforcement in remote regions of the country and cross-border safe havens, where limited government security presence emboldens criminal activity. It needs to closely monitor evolving and emergent organized criminal groups to determine how they will confront, absorb, or align with former FARC dissidents, especially at the FARC regional-command level.
3. *Secure FARC sanctuaries.* FARC-affiliated splinter groups and cartels still operate with impunity in many remote parts of Colombia, especially drug-trafficking arteries in the central and eastern departments of Meta, Caquetá, and Guaviare.<sup>13</sup> The government must establish and sustain a robust police presence in these areas, supported by community outreach to win over populations long accustomed to FARC control.
4. *Continue to support whole-of government development efforts.* Colombian military and police capabilities are already being employed to build roads to isolated areas, conduct coca eradication to support legitimate agricultural development, and clear landmines in former FARC strongholds. This effort should be sustained and expanded to include engineering assets to improve infrastructure, provision of interim communications support to remote areas, and vetting and recruitment of locally sourced security forces who have a vested interest in the long-term, legitimate security of their villages.<sup>14</sup>

## Conclusion

Despite peaceful overtures, the FARC remains a hybrid threat. The FARC Secretariat, once a central figure for coordinating the FARC's direction and actions, now struggles to sustain a united front as its ideological foundations are shaken by criminal interests, regional alliances of convenience, and a message that is undermined by the failures of communism in the region. Whether it will ultimately transform into a legitimate political party, pursue sanctuary in at-risk neighboring states, or devolve into a regionally distributed narco-terrorist network remains to be seen. In the interim, Colombia's Defense Forces must be prepared to respond to this highly adaptive, regionally distributed threat.

## Figure Credits

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Megacities—cities with populations of ten million or higher—are an anticipated operational environment (OE) of the future. Megacities characterized as having dense urban terrain (DuT) are expected to represent “strategic key terrain in any future crisis that requires U.S. military intervention.”<sup>1</sup> In order to achieve success in such an OE, the Army must understand and train to operate in DuT and megacities. While each megacity has its own unique characteristics, Manila—the capital of the Philippines—represents a paragon for study, exhibiting conditions and characteristics that might be generalizable to other megacities around the world. As such, it serves as a useful case study into key conditions of megacity environments for future training, education, and leader development purposes.

The conditions discussed in this article that manifest in Manila, and are representative of conditions that would manifest in other megacity environments, are:

1. Massive population growth and urban challenges,
2. Local governance challenges, and
3. National economic hub vulnerability.

While additional characteristics may be present in other megacities and are also worthy of study, these three categories extant in Metro Manila provide a foundation for analyzing the rapid growth, urbanization, and societal grievances that shape the complexity of the metropolitan Manila (Metro Manila) OE. These common challenges elicit key takeaways that should be paramount considerations for any potential operations in megacities or DuT.

*The following discussion is the result of analysis using the Global Cultural Knowledge Network’s (GCKN’s) Fault Lines methodology. By utilizing this methodology for analysis, GCKN was able to reveal real-world considerations, based upon social science methodology, for potential operations in the DuT of Metro Manila. To understand the most significant **exploitable** factors of instability in Metro Manila, see Figure 3, GCKN Fault Lines: Manila, Philippines, at the conclusion of this article.*

### **Operational Environment Overview**

The Philippines is a vast and diverse country, consisting of more than 7,600 islands over 115,830 square miles and boasting multiple ethnic and tribal groups speaking 182 separate languages.<sup>2</sup> The capital, Manila, is part of the megacity of Metro Manila, which functions as the center of politics and culture as well as the economic engine of the Philippines. Metro Manila is one of the most densely populated and ethnically diverse cities in the world. The entire metro area, while not necessarily key terrain tactically, holds importance to the Republic of the Philippines across the operational variables, making it key strategic terrain.

The DuT of Metro Manila presents challenges common to megacities worldwide due to the physical, social, and political aspects of the rapid urbanization/population growth caused by Manila’s role as the economic center of the Philippines, as well as the lack of a central metropolitan government. From a physical terrain perspective, Metro Manila’s large and growing population is packed into a relatively small area, with both vertical construction and widespread areas of unregulated, flimsy, and potentially combustible structures. From a sociocultural perspective, the DuT creates many challenges for Manilans of the lower socioeconomic strata that could fuel grievances against the government and upper socioeconomic classes. Metro Manila also lacks a central city government due to the dysfunctional relationships between the component cities.

## Massive Population Growth and Urban Challenges

Metro Manila has grown rapidly over the last half-century, with an overall population increase of 480 percent between 1960 and 2010.<sup>3</sup> Estimates place the population of Manila at 20 million by 2020.<sup>4</sup> According to the 2015 census, Metro Manila has a population of some 12.8 million packed into an alluvial plain constricted by Manila Bay to the west, Laguna de Bay to the southeast, and mountains to the east and northeast.<sup>5</sup> This makes Metro Manila one of the most densely populated cities in the world, with over 182,000 people per square mile.<sup>6</sup>

Surveys conducted roughly a decade ago indicate that, at that time, approximately one-third of Manilans lived in slum or squatter communities that covered around 10 percent of its land area.<sup>7</sup> While these figures are dated, it is likely that the trends associated with rapid growth and overpopulation have continued to exacerbate the situation. According to a study on Metro Manila, the proliferation of the slum squatter communities in the city is chiefly due to the high cost of land, which is caused by rapid urbanization and unregulated land speculation; these high prices effectively exclude many low-income urban residents from the legal housing market.<sup>8</sup> Many of these squatters live in environmental danger zones (in flood zones, along rail lines, on hillsides, by garbage dumps, etc.), and illegal settlements have limited access to potable water and sanitation infrastructure.<sup>9</sup> According to one academic, the scope of the illegal settlements “inevitably raises questions about the government’s strategies for economic and social progress.”<sup>10</sup>

### Key Takeaways:

- The most densely populated sections of megacities could be typified by unregulated, flimsy, and potentially combustible structures—presenting a variety of challenges to movement and maneuver.
- Most megacities have difficulties in providing the entire city’s population with adequate essential services. Many residents are forced to survive on pirated, or nonexistent, services. Associated hygiene, sanitation, and health issues could affect civil-military operations and potentially require a substantial commitment of medical and civil affairs resources.

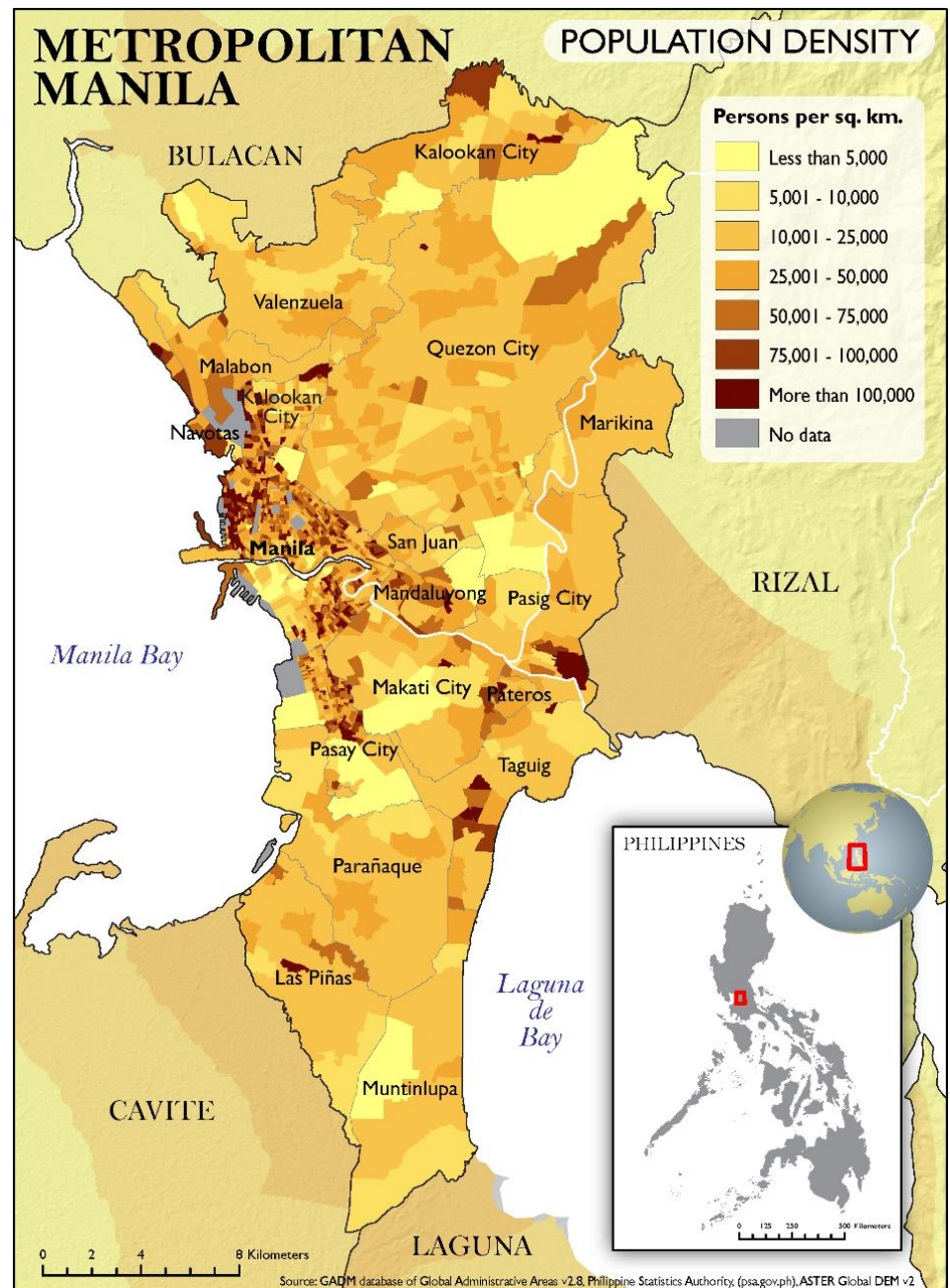


Figure 1. Population Density of Metropolitan Manila



## Local Governance Challenges

The existing governing structure and its accompanying political divides further complicate the situation in Metro Manila. The metropolitan area is a rapidly industrializing and urbanizing region composed of 16 component cities and one municipality<sup>1</sup> spread over 246 square miles.<sup>11</sup> Metro Manila lacks a centralized government that can holistically and coherently tackle the problems present across the metro region, e.g., drugs, crime, poverty, and corruption. The President of the Philippines has a special council for Manila-based problems, but as the seats on the council are presidentially appointed, the committee's duty to serve the people is overshadowed by the President's agenda. Due to the politicized nature of the special council, it typically manages symptomatic issues related to overpopulation and urbanization, such as traffic/congestion and garbage, as those problems are more visible and the costs are more manageable than addressing underlying systemic social problems such as predatory housing practices, critical housing shortage, and slum life. Regardless, the component city mayors generally ignore the committee and focus on their own agendas.<sup>12</sup>

The component cities are not entirely self-contained but are, at a minimum, politically autonomous, and do not have a history of collaboration.<sup>13</sup> As with national politics, Metro Manila's component cities have been run by political dynasties for decades.<sup>14</sup> These influential families have passed political power and control of land holdings down through the generations, creating one of Asia's largest rich-poor divides.<sup>15</sup> While not generally described as a patronage system, there are similarities to such systems that have dominated many Central and South American societies for centuries. Each familial dynasty is driven ultimately by its own self-interest. Shared problems could only be managed under the current structure if the component cities worked collaboratively. Unfortunately, there is currently no incentive or forcing function in place to cause them to work together, so solutions to problems for each component end at its city boundary.<sup>16</sup>

### Key Takeaway:

- Civil-military relations in megacities could be complicated by multiple and independent government organizations within the city limits. Coordination with these government elements would be in addition to coordination with the national government, thus exacerbating the complexity of operating in such environments.

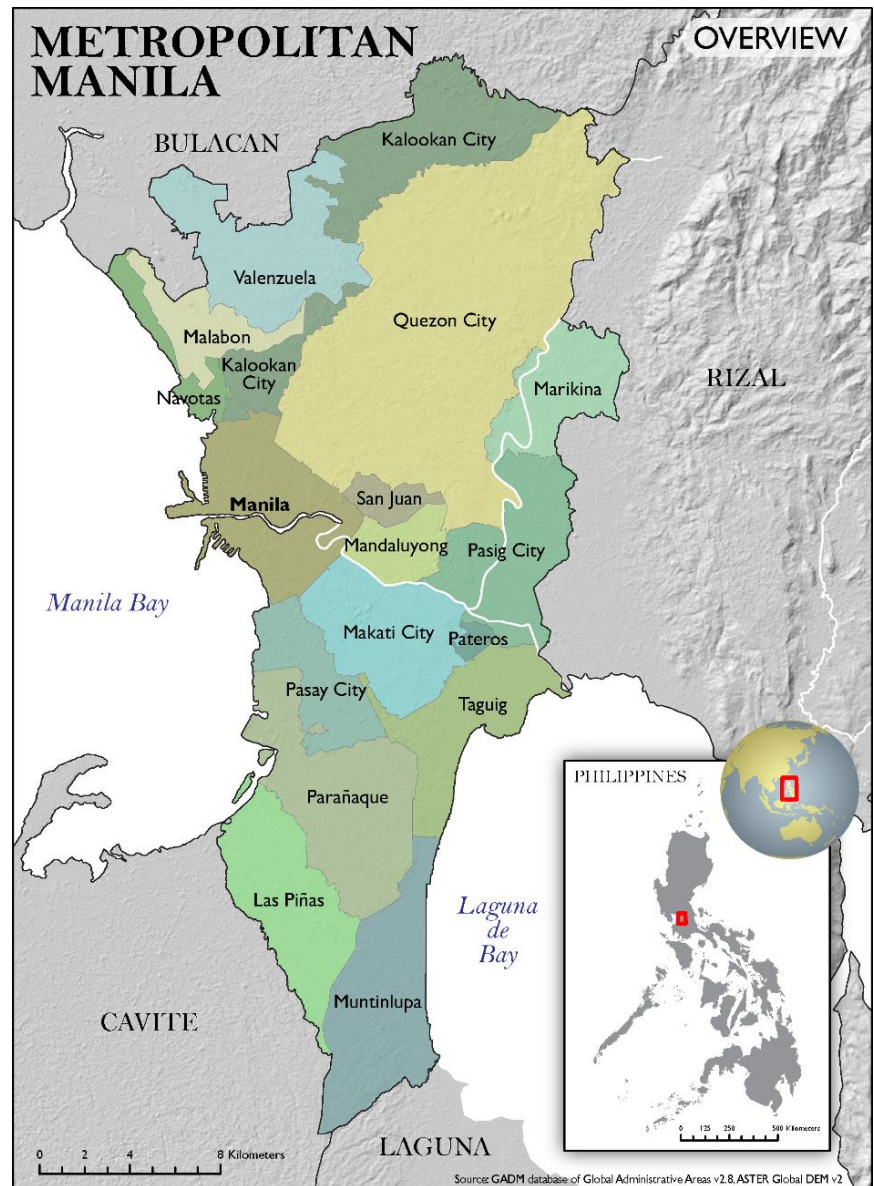


Figure 2. Component Cities of Metro Manila

<sup>1</sup> Caloocan, Las Piñas, Makati, Malabon, Mandaluyong, Manila, Marikina, Muntinlupa, Navotas, Parañaque, Pasay, Pasig, Quezon City, San Juan, Taguig, Valenzuela, and the municipality of Pateros



## National Economic Hub Vulnerability

Metro Manila has been described as the economic engine of the Philippines and contains, according to one author, “a disproportionate share of the country’s economic production.”<sup>17</sup> Manila has four main economic roles: the center of Philippine integration into the global economy; the center of consumption for the rapidly growing middle class; the center of the country’s tourism industry; and the center for labor export, i.e., overseas contract workers.<sup>18</sup> Migrants travel from across the Philippines and Southeast Asia to Manila in search of jobs, adding to the diversity of the capital region. Up to 10 percent of the Filipino workforce finds employment overseas through agencies based in Manila.<sup>19</sup> Throughout the country, and especially in Metro Manila, there are long-term single-parent households as a result of one parent working overseas. Labor export is vital to Metro Manila, as “remittances from millions of Filipinos working overseas are propping up the local economy.”<sup>20</sup>

Mirroring the political situation within Metro Manila, a small number of influential families have long overseen one of Asia’s biggest rich-poor divides in the Philippines, passing economic power and control of land holdings down through the generations.<sup>21</sup> In fact, one expert notes that “[f]amily-owned enterprises constitute a large part of the economy...over 90 percent of the top 1000 corporations in the Philippines are not publicly listed.”<sup>22</sup> Members of the lower socioeconomic strata accept this situation as the status quo with little or no challenge, since it maintains their standard of living. Failure to maintain the status quo could result in backlash against the “ruling” families.

### *Key Takeaways:*

- Megacities are generally economic powerhouses, representing the bulk of the economic engine for an entire country. Disruptions to the economic environment of the city would not only significantly impact the population of the city with potential spikes in crime, disease, malnutrition, or even starvation, but could also severely impact the economic stability of the country as a whole.
- The centralization of the national economy in a megacity leaves the country extremely vulnerable. Should an actor choose to incite unrest in the population based on economic grievances, the effects could be felt nationally.

## Conclusion

The social, political, and economic conditions discussed within this article highlight the complex and entwined nature of megacities, and make Metro Manila an exemplar of DuT. Indicative of megacities around the world, Metro Manila represents key strategic terrain for the Philippines nationally. As such, it illustrates the complex political and civil-military challenges that would impact potential operations or activities in megacities.

# Fault Lines: Manila, Philippines

DEC 2017

Metro Manila, which encompasses 16 component cities, is home to over twelve million inhabitants. There is a disproportionate share of both the economic production and cultural resources of the Philippines located in Manila. As such, conditions that cause friction in Manila have the potential to affect the stability of the Philippines as a whole.

The competing political agendas among the component cities result in a lack of shared accountability and consensus concerning urban challenges. The primary social issues for the urban poor in Metro Manila are homelessness, poverty, crime, and drug abuse. As a result of the high poverty rates throughout the Philippines, Filipinos across the country flock to Manila in the hopes of finding opportunities for a better life. However, Metro Manila's economy does not provide enough for the increasing population. As a result, Manila exports a large labor force in the form of overseas contract workers (OCW) as skilled workers that are forced to look elsewhere for adequate employment. Remittances from Manila OCW alone account for more than 10% of the national GDP. Although OCW is a viable option, many cannot qualify for some of the overseas work. Thus, the lack of economic opportunities for a great many contribute to crime and drug use.

President Duterte was elected on a relentless campaign and promise to reduce criminal activity and drug use. Duterte has maintained a high approval rating while continuing to benefit from a reputation for militancy initially established as the mayor of Davao. The popular belief that he can reduce the drug and crime problems through a security crackdown has bolstered the population's faith in him. The exact number of deaths resulting from Duterte's policies is not known, but most of the people killed are believed to be primarily drug users or small-time dealers in poor communities. Although there has been public criticism for deaths, there is still societal support for the war which suggests a high tolerance for the use of state violence with a limited concern for legal restrictions on the use of state power. Despite these recent measures aimed at improving the quality of life across the entire nation, there is no real indication of an improvement for the urban poor in Metro Manila sowing dissatisfaction and a perception that the Duterte has broken his promises.

The following fault lines, if exploited, have the potential to contribute to instability in the Manila operational environment:

**Widespread dissatisfaction with the government's broken promises:** Duterte's strongarm tactics regarding his domestic policies have only alienated people and reduced their trust in his ability to solve the problems of the everyday people.

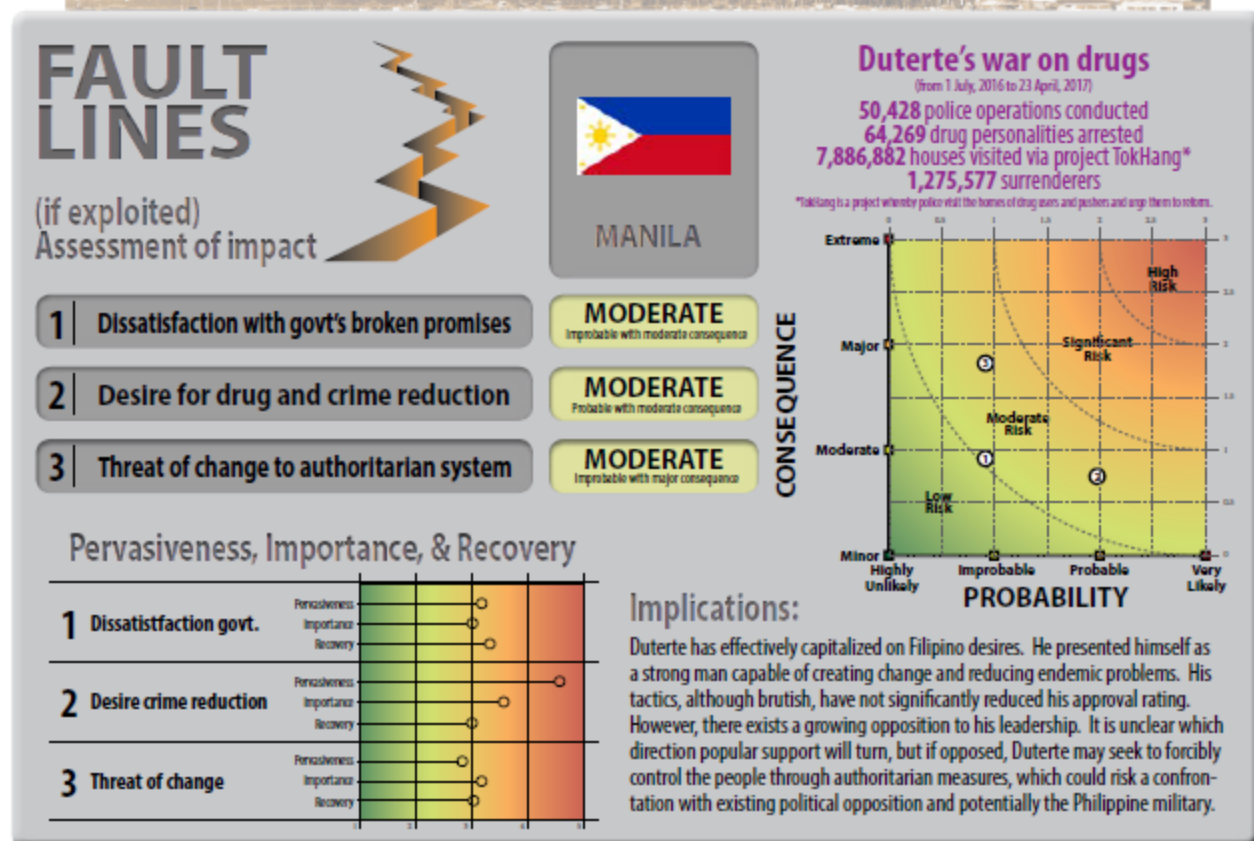
**Overwhelming societal desire for drug and crime reduction:** The Philippines has long suffered from an endemic drug and crime problem. Their desire to be rid of these problems is so great that they are willing to forego personal liberties and due process of law in exchange for drug and crime eradication.

**Threat of change in the political structure to a Duterte-led authoritarian system of rule:** Duterte has demonstrated a desire and a willingness to change the government's system of rule to accomplish his administration's goals.



**FAULT LINES**  
are "exploitable  
sources of  
instability in the  
human domain;  
they can be real or  
perceived."

Source: GCKN Fault Line Methodology, 2017



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Figure 3. GCKN Fault Lines: Manila, Philippines

## Figure Credits

Banner: Mike Gonzalez. "[File:Big Manila.jpg](#)." Wikimedia Commons. 5 April 2007. [CC BY-SA 3.0](#).

Figure 1: TRADOC G-2 Global Cultural Knowledge Network. "Population Density of Metropolitan Manila." December 2017.

Figure 2: TRADOC G-2. Global Cultural Knowledge Network. "Component Cities of Metro Manila." December 2017.

Figure 3: TRADOC G-2 Global Cultural Knowledge Network. "Fault Lines: Manila, Philippines." December 2017.

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# FANATICISM AND THE PENDING NORTH KOREAN HUMANITARIAN CATASTROPHE - AN ANALYSIS



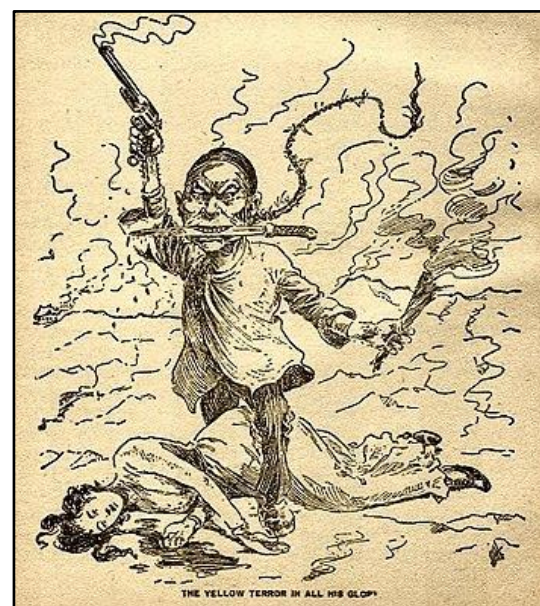
by [Brad Marvel](#) (CGI Federal CTR), TRADOC G-2 ACE Threats Integration

The contest between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and the Republic of Korea (ROK) is one of history's longest multinational showdowns. For nearly seventy years these two nations, along with their respective allies, have clashed along political, military, and cultural lines. The prominence and endurance of the Korean conflict created a virtual cottage industry of literature and analysis covering every aspect of the situation and future of the Korean Peninsula. Predictions about the nature of the next—and hopefully final—chapter of the Korean conflict are a constant feature of defense media.

One of the themes consistently presented in analyses of the DPRK and any future war on the Korean Peninsula is the fanaticism of the Worker's Party of Korea (WPK) and the Korean People's Army (KPA). Fanaticism is often presented as ubiquitous and all-encompassing, positing a North Korean army and population prepared to fight to the death resisting invaders intent on regime change. This characterization is often applied broadly across the KPA and the DPRK population, a kind of Orientalism<sup>1</sup> that can be traced back through the Vietnam and Korean Wars, the World Wars, and the various "Yellow Peril"-driven colonial wars, rebellions, and insurrections that dotted Asia throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries.<sup>1</sup>

While there most certainly is a large cohort of truly fanatical KPA soldiers and DPRK citizens, a showdown with North Korea is not likely to play out in the oft-presented way: namely, an army and population fighting to the death. History shows that armies and populations under severe autocratic regimes rarely fight "to the last man"—especially when poorly supplied and led. Instead, these wars tend to transition rapidly from high-intensity combat to significant humanitarian crises that place major and often unforeseen stresses on the victorious or occupying forces.

This article proposes a different view of fanaticism in the DPRK and KPA. It then posits a possible scenario during the "stabilize" and "transition to civil authority" phases of joint operations following open conflict between the DPRK and the ROK, US, and other allies. Finally, it presents a set of training implications for friendly forces based on conclusions drawn from this scenario.



**Figure 1. Political cartoon warning readers about the "yellow peril," c. 1898**

<sup>1</sup> Orientalism is a phrase coined by writer Edward W. Said in his 1978 book [Orientalism](#) (Parthenon Books). Orientalism is summarized as an exaggeration of difference, the presumption of Western superiority, and the application of clichéd analytical models for perceiving the Oriental world. It implies a perspective of Asian/Eastern cultures and peoples as exotic, uncivilized, and potentially dangerous. In the context of this paper, it implies a different intellectual treatment of the militaries and populations of Asian/Eastern countries vice European/Western counterparts.

## On Fanaticism

In the context of political and military history, a fanatic is one who puts a country, a regime, or a military unit ahead of all other factors, regardless of the detriments to doing so. Fanatics may refuse to retreat or surrender despite overwhelming odds, may willingly sacrifice life, health, or property, and may even hold preservation of the regime as more important than preserving their nations and communities.<sup>2</sup>

Despite relatively few historical examples of truly fanatical behavior, writers and analysts are remarkably quick to brand threat forces as “fanatical.” Labeling like this combines sensationalism, xenophobia, and racism in order to demonize the people and soldiers of a rival nation. Authors and analysts typically describe the use of some combination of the following practices to present a nation or army as fanatical:<sup>3</sup>

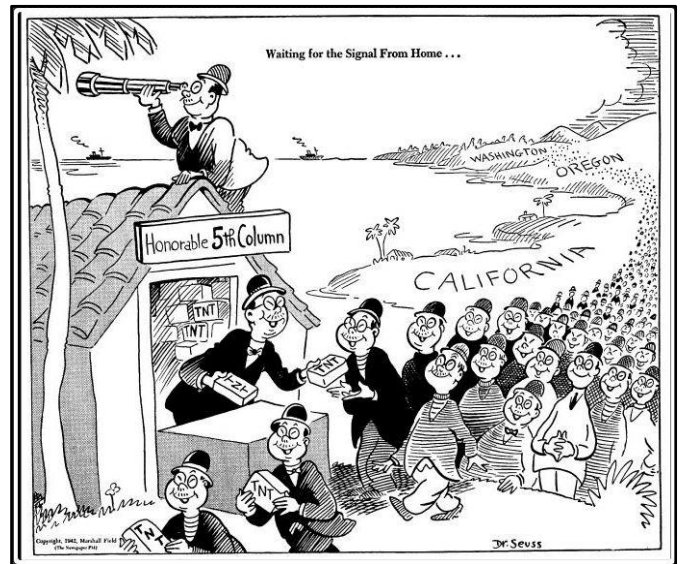
- Severe and ongoing indoctrination, usually preaching unquestioned loyalty to the regime;
- Cultural practices suggesting a strong social/national tradition of fanaticism;
- Poverty or destitution as the only alternative to fanatical regime support;
- Severe and often violent reprisal for disloyal behavior; and
- Aggressive or bellicose foreign policy, often completely against reason.



**Figure 3. The Hitler Youth is often employed as an archetypal example of youth indoctrination**

- The inner circle surrounding the leader (e.g., Nazi Germany’s Hitler Cabinet, Imperial Japan’s Supreme War Council, or Baathist Iraq’s Revolutionary Command Council);
- Leaders of the leader’s paramilitary or police wing (e.g., Nazi Germany’s SS and Gestapo, Fascist Italy’s Blackshirts, or the Soviet NKVD); and
- Small numbers of specially recruited, trained, and indoctrinated military units (e.g., the Ottoman Empire’s Janissary corps, Nazi Germany’s Liebstandarte SS Adolf Hitler, or the Islamic State’s Inghemasiyoun).

Outside of these types of organizations, modern examples of soldiers or units behaving fanatically are few and far between, even in the context of the massive mid-century conflicts between autocratic regimes that comprised much of the Second World War. Purported fanaticism was relatively easy to come by when things went well for the ruling regimes: scores of citizens and soldiers alike enthusiastically pledged themselves to the cause, eager to participate in a winning political and military campaign. However, when the realities of war—particularly a losing war—revealed themselves,



**Figure 2. Dr. Seuss cartoon c. 1942 depicting Japanese-Americans as fanatical Japanese sleeper agents preparing to bomb American targets**

These practices should sound very familiar to students of military history. They have been used, accurately in most cases, to describe activities within Nazi Germany, Imperial Japan, the Soviet Union, Baathist Iraq, and the DPRK, among many other autocratic regimes. Moreover, many of these efforts are aimed to *specifically* create a fanatically loyal population and military. Why then, should one not assume large swaths of a population and military of an autocratic regime to be fanatics, when a government or regime is deliberately trying to foster fanatical behavior?

True fanaticism, especially among armies, is vanishingly rare—even in the strictest autocratic nations. Historically, it has typically been limited to the following types of organizations:



fanaticism rapidly gave way to more rational and self-serving behavior. For all but the most dedicated, protection of family, of homeland, and of self took precedence over blind devotion to a lost cause.

Below are some commonly mentioned examples of fanaticism from the World War II era, along with associated outcomes.

#### *“Not One Step Back!”*

The famous Order No. 227 from Josef Stalin to the Red Army in 1942 resulted in many Red Army units being destroyed in place by the German onslaught.<sup>4</sup> This manner of “no retreat” order is perhaps the most commonly cited example of the type of crazed, irrational order given by a tyrant to his military in a desperate attempt to stave off defeat. Tactical “hold at all costs” orders are fairly common throughout history, and at times have swung entire battles, such as the “Hornet’s Nest” at the Battle of Shiloh, or the Battle of the Imjin River in the Korean War.<sup>5</sup> Strategically, however, “no retreat” orders rarely offer any benefit; they deny commanders the flexibility for tactical withdrawal or force engagements on unfavorable terrain. In practice, “no retreat” orders tend to either be ignored or halfheartedly obeyed; in many examples where commanders took them to heart, they wound up suffering serious defeats. Even in cases where such orders did not result in disaster, they were nearly always deemed ineffective or counterproductive and subsequently quietly rescinded. Amusingly, Adolf Hitler was so fond of such orders—and had consequently suffered so many catastrophic defeats—that his commanders began actively avoiding areas Hitler designated as critical, even if occupying them made good tactical sense.<sup>6</sup>



**Figure 4. A stamp commemorating Stalin’s Order No. 227; in practice, the order was widely ignored and quietly rescinded**

#### *“No Surrender”*

Another commonly cited order, one that is often aimed at Asian cultures and militaries, is “no surrender.” In reality, orders in this vein are extremely uncommon and their effect on actual troop behavior is at best questionable. There are, of course, numerous examples of units in history voluntarily fighting to destruction instead of surrendering, but this practice has become rare in the modern age and virtually nonexistent on a wide scale. Nonetheless, refusals to surrender remain an

anachronistic piece of “common knowledge,” reinforced by things such as one-off examples of Japanese soldiers refusing to abandon their posts decades after the end of the Second World War. This misconception can likely be traced to Orientalist propaganda from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, which is itself largely a byproduct of the Japanese Empire’s revision of the *bushido* concept in the late 1800s.<sup>7</sup> Seeking a way to compensate for materiel and training disadvantages versus potential Western opponents, Japanese leaders evolved an idea of “fighting spirit” overcoming a lack of quality weapons and inexperienced soldiery. Over time, this evolved into an obsession with the attack throughout the Imperial Japanese military, which eventually created the questionable perception by Westerners that Japanese soldiers preferred suicidal charges to surrender. A comparison of *bushido* to the French concept of *élan vital* shows the disparity in



**Figure 5. A French Army bayonet charge. *Élan vital* was in most respects similar to *bushido*, but did not carry the same connotations of fanaticism to most Westerners as did the Japanese concept.**

assessment between European and Asian military culture: the concept behind *élan vital* is virtually identical to that of modern *bushido*; yet, French soldiers and leaders were practically never regarded as fanatical.<sup>8</sup> They were instead regarded as dashing and brave (if somewhat foolhardy), despite the disastrous results of Plan XVII in the early days of World War I.



That said, Imperial Japan suffered a relatively high proportion of killed-to-captured soldiers, even when compared with other armies that issued “do not surrender” orders.<sup>9</sup> There are several unique factors that contributed to this phenomenon:

- 1) Most of the fighting in the Pacific theater of operations took place on islands that were cut off from seaborne access. Thus, strategic withdrawal for Japanese troops was rarely an option.
- 2) Japanese soldiers and civilians were told by their leadership that they would be imprisoned, tortured, and killed by Allied armies if they surrendered. This was, of course, a falsehood designed to fortify the fighting spirit; in the end, it had little real effect other than to discourage surrender and encourage suicide in desperate situations.<sup>10</sup>
- 3) Surrender was made literally illegal in the Senjinkun Military Code of 1941: “Do not give up under any circumstances, keeping in mind your responsibility not to tarnish the glorious history of the Imperial Army with its tradition of invincibility.”<sup>11</sup> Despite this code being drilled into Japanese recruits as a divine order from the emperor, it too ultimately had a marginal effect on actual battlefield results, only delaying the act of surrender and increasing casualties on both sides as a result.<sup>12</sup>

Throughout WWII there were widely publicized examples of suicide “banzai” charges, suicide bombings, and ritual suicides by members of the Imperial Japanese military, especially as their situation became increasingly desperate. Perhaps most famously, some 2,800 Japanese pilots attempted to deliberately fly their aircraft into Allied ships.<sup>13</sup> *Kamikazes* then—as now—held an outsized reputation as compared to both their total number and their effect on the war.

The perception that suicidal behavior represented a significant proportion of the Japanese military and population is incorrect. Some two million Japanese soldiers died in the war; nearly a third of these deaths were from malnutrition, disease, or other non-combat causes.<sup>14</sup> Contrast this with the nearly seven million Japanese troops who *did* surrender peacefully, despite the multiple layers of propaganda attempting to prohibit the practice.<sup>15</sup>

#### *“Scorched Earth”*

Scorched earth orders, particularly as a punitive device in the death throes of an autocratic regime, are another commonly cited device illustrating fanaticism. While scorched earth strategies intended to deny the enemy use of resources are a fairly common practice—most famously used by the Russians during the French invasion of 1812—there are only a handful of actual punitive scorched earth retreats in modern history, none of which took place on a regime’s own territory.<sup>16</sup> Two prominent examples are the Nazi retreat from Italy in 1944 and Iraq’s retreat from Kuwait in 1991.<sup>17</sup> Both the Nazis and the Baathists deliberately destroyed infrastructure for no real tactical or strategic gain, but each did so on the soil of other nations. Indeed, there are several examples of subordinates refusing to follow scorched earth orders issued by failing regimes, the most famous of which is the nearly complete disregard by military and government officials alike for Adolf Hitler’s “Nero Order” in the spring of 1945.<sup>18</sup>

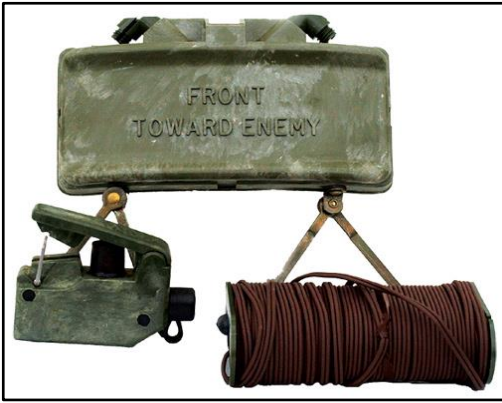
#### *Lower Regard for Life*

Another common Orientalist position that translates easily to military fanaticism is depicting “human wave” techniques as proof that Asian peoples have a lower regard for human life than do their Western counterparts. This kind of thinking can be directly traced back to at least the Boxer Rebellion, though it likely predates this event by many years.<sup>19</sup> It was reinforced during the Korean War when UN soldiers faced human-wave attacks, again from the Chinese. As this approach to modern warfare filtered through Western politics and media, it gradually translated to Asian countries having a lesser



**Figure 6. A *banzai* charge, purportedly during the Battle of Okinawa. Though famous, the practice was banned as “wasteful” by some Japanese commanders.**

regard for human life than did European countries, as they were more willing to expend the lives of soldiers to achieve tactical or strategic objectives.<sup>20</sup> Similar techniques employed by European armies along the banks of the Isonzo during WWI or in the streets of Stalingrad during WWII are ignored, as they do not fit the “Asian horde” narrative.<sup>21</sup>



**Figure 7. The M18A1 “Claymore” mine was developed specifically to counter human-wave techniques encountered during the Korean War**

This is not to say that autocratic regimes do not place a lower value on human life and human rights than do Western liberal democracies. Rather, characterizing Asian military leaders and soldiers as being more callous to casualties, or more willing to sacrifice themselves, is not supported by fact. Human-wave techniques do not involve blindly throwing men against entrenched positions; rather, they involve careful infiltration followed by close-quarters engagements, intended to restrict one’s opponent from employing artillery or air support effectively. Human-wave techniques were developed specifically as a counter to Western military technological overmatch. Contrary to depictions of them being primitive and simplistic, they are quite sophisticated and well-conceived, using one’s manpower to offset numerous advantages enjoyed by the opposition.

### Fanaticism in North Korea

Images portraying a fanatical and deeply indoctrinated population are present on virtually every media product that discusses the DPRK. Near-constant military parades display huge formations goose-stepping past the Supreme Leader’s review box. Video clips show KPA soldiers enduring subhuman conditions, waiting for the chance to die in the service of the motherland. Constant provocation from DPRK leadership seems to be seeking a nuclear exchange, along with a resumption of horrendously destructive conflict on the Korean Peninsula. In short, the DPRK is portrayed as a land filled with obsessive and irrational people ready to destroy their homeland—and even much of the earth and its human population—to maintain the ruling regime.



**Figure 8. Thousands of North Korean children are inducted into the “Korean Children’s Union,” the WPK’s youth organization**



**Figure 9. A German Stormtrooper, common to the 1918 Spring Offensive. Though attacks by these well-trained and disciplined troops were often initially successful, starving troops breaking rank to loot captured food stores bogged down and ultimately doomed the entire operation.**

This portrayal clearly fits the DPRK leadership. The ruling regime appears ready to do anything, to include initiating a nuclear exchange, in order to stay in power.<sup>22</sup> So, too, it can be assumed that some portion of the KPA are “true believers”—ready to do virtually anything to protect the regime. This number is almost certainly quite small; historically, it has been limited to only a handful of small units that exist in close proximity to the national leadership. Extending the assumption of suicidal fanaticism to the KPA as a whole, or to the general population of the DPRK, is not well-supported by historical examples. Though the KPA is presented as tough, well-trained, and zealously devoted to the regime, the reality painted by defectors and other analyses shows an army that lives in appalling conditions, is poorly equipped and led, and—perhaps most importantly—is starving.<sup>23</sup>

Similarly, there is little historical evidence to support the notion that KPA soldiers will continue to resist *en masse* once their military situation becomes untenable. As illustrated above, soldiers and commanders alike historically ignore “do not retreat” and “do not surrender” orders whenever convenient; suicidal last-ditch “human

wave” charges are correspondingly rare. History also demonstrates numerous examples of well-trained, highly disciplined, but starving troops breaking ranks when food was suddenly made available to them: one famous example was German Stormtroopers abruptly stopping successful attacks in order to loot and eat captured Allied food stores during the Spring Offensive of 1918.<sup>24</sup> Similarly, starving North Korean soldiers, when faced with the choice between continued resistance and the relative safety and plentiful food offered to prisoners, may well choose the latter once that choice is known.

One complicating issue, as seen both in the Pacific and the Eastern Front during WWII, is the effect propaganda has on soldiers’ willingness to surrender or on civilians’ willingness to cooperate with invading or occupying forces. There is little doubt the DPRK will tell its army and its people that capture by American or allied forces will result in mistreatment, torture, harsh imprisonment, and executions. This technique worked effectively during WWII and the Korean War and will almost certainly increase resistance to surrender among both soldiers and civilians.<sup>25</sup>

### **North Korea in Transition—A Prediction**

What should all of this information indicate to Army and joint analysts in the event of a high-intensity war of reunification on the Korean Peninsula? This section presents a possible set of circumstances that US and allied soldiers may encounter in such a conflict, along with associated implications for planning and training.

In this scenario, the DPRK and the ROK recommence open hostilities after many decades of an uneasy truce. The conflict stays fully conventional, and China is not involved. After an initial, highly destructive exchange of fire across the 38th parallel, the ROK, US, and other allies begin a full-scale offensive into the DPRK with the twin objectives of 1) defeating the KPA, and 2) deposing the Kim regime and installing a liberal democratic system in its place.

It is assumed that ROK, US, and allied forces will successfully execute this offensive, though at high cost and great destruction in and around Seoul and the current demilitarized zone. Without Chinese support, the DPRK will lose a sustained fight and will gradually retreat towards Pyongyang. Allied forces will occupy most DPRK territory. This dynamic is very similar to what was seen in Nazi Germany during the final months of 1945, with German leadership defending an ever-shrinking Reich while most German territory is “liberated” from Nazi control. While it was an extraordinary and challenging situation then, in contemporary or near-future North Korea, the challenges will be magnified.

#### *Behavior of DPRK Civilians*

In spite of decades of indoctrination and propaganda, it is very unlikely that DPRK civilians will offer any serious resistance to occupying forces; no large civilian population has formally resisted a full-scale military occupation in modern history. DPRK civilians will almost certainly be terrified of occupying forces, however, having been told by both government and military sources that widespread abuse, rape, and other such mistreatment await them. As witnessed in the Battle of Okinawa, such disinformation can be powerful enough to prompt mass suicides.<sup>26</sup> In addition, famine and disease will likely be widespread throughout the DPRK population, creating a situation ripe for epidemics and mass starvation. Nonetheless, it can be assumed—based on numerous 20th- and 21st-century examples—that most DPRK civilians will willingly and peacefully acquiesce to occupation. Though this is an optimal outcome, it will put enormous strain on both military and governmental organizations in dealing with what will become one of the largest humanitarian crises in human history. The military will likely be the first line facing this crisis, and it will complicate combat operations considerably.

#### *Behavior of KPA Soldiers*

While there will no doubt be some number of fanatical KPA soldiers, the DPRK ideal of every unit fighting to the last man will almost certainly not occur. KPA soldiers will fight with great enthusiasm early in the conflict, but a lack of supplies,



**Figure 10. The “Suicide Cliff” on Okinawa. Thousands of native Okinawans leapt from the cliff after being told of impending mistreatment by Americans if captured.**



poor leadership, and hard defeats at the hands of Allied armies will rapidly reduce their *esprit de corps*. Eventually, these soldiers will be forced to make stark choices between surrender and continued starvation, exposure, and annihilation. When this happens, the challenge facing US and allied commanders will not be large numbers of suicide attacks or refusals to abandon hopeless positions. Rather, it will be a flood of sick and malnourished refugees. In addition to millions of starving DPRK citizens, allied commanders will have to deal with hundreds of thousands of starving, diseased, and shell-shocked KPA soldiers as they surrender in huge numbers. Much like American commanders who faced mass surrender by German and Japanese forces in 1945, processing, feeding, and medically treating such a huge number of people is comparable to response to a major natural disaster. KPA soldiers will be highly distrustful of their captors—particularly if they are South Korean or Japanese—and Western soldiers will face challenges of language and cultural barriers.

#### *Behavior of KPA Military Leaders*

Military leaders of the KPA are chosen in large part based on their loyalty to the regime. In addition, KPA officers who show disloyalty or threaten dishonor face severe punishments, including imprisonment, torture, and execution. This adds an additional layer of complexity onto what is otherwise fairly predictable behavior. It implies that they will be more reluctant to surrender both themselves and their units regardless of the military or humanitarian situation. However, considering the preeminent status the KPA enjoys with DPRK government and society, military officers—particularly senior military officers—should be viewed as something of a center of gravity in a Korean conflict: the Kim regime cannot continue without absolute military support, so eroding this support is a high-payoff effort towards ending the regime.

#### *Behavior of Senior DPRK Leadership*



**Figure 11. A Waffen SS soldier surrenders. Despite orders to continue resistance and rumors that they would be summarily executed by the Allies, SS units, considered the most fanatically loyal in the Wehrmacht, surrendered mostly without incident.**



**Figure 12. Coincidentally, the SCUD variants that comprise the bulk of the DPRK ballistic missile force are derived from Nazi Germany's V-2**

This is simultaneously the easiest and most difficult behavior to predict: it is clear that the Kim family and the senior elements of the WPK will attempt to do virtually anything to defend the regime. What is less clear is 1) what options are actually available to them, and 2) how enthusiastically those charged with carrying out their orders will follow them, in the event that the regime is in great danger. Historically, autocratic regimes under serious threat order retaliatory strikes directed against their opponents, the most famous being Hitler's employment of the "Vengeance" V-1 and V-2 missiles versus the Allies in 1944 and 1945.<sup>27</sup> It is relatively certain that the Kim regime, in its death throes, will order some manner of retaliatory action, and South Korea is the most likely target due both to longstanding political and social rivalry and to simple geographic proximity. Possibilities for offensive action include massed artillery or missile strikes, suicide bombers or other terrorist techniques, or chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons. The regime may also attempt to order some manner of retaliation against the DPRK population, mimicking orders given by Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union, and Imperial Japan during WWII. The enthusiasm with which lower-level leaders have carried out these orders, however, has varied widely. These actions have the possibility to create catastrophic casualties and widespread destruction, while the wide variety of potential options available to the DPRK regime complicates effective prevention or mitigation.

## Training Implications

One of the defining characteristics of the US military's late 20th- and early 21st-century campaigns is a "win the war, lose the peace" sequence of events. Despite enjoying consistent and often overwhelming success on the battlefield, America and its allies have repeatedly failed to achieve long-term political and strategic objectives, due in no small part to the military's problematic transition from decisive operations to follow-on operations.

A major conflict on the Korean Peninsula promises to be one of the sternest-ever tests of the "stabilize" and "enable civil authority" phases of joint operations. Immediately following what will almost certainly be a brutal and highly destructive conflict, the US, ROK, and their allies will face both the deep political and sectarian divides between north and south, plus a humanitarian crisis comparable to that caused by a major natural disaster. A failure to "win the peace" in North Korea will result in pervasive instability and violence, exacerbated by widespread disease and starvation. With that result, the political and economic reconstruction of North Korea will be set back years, if not permanently undermined.

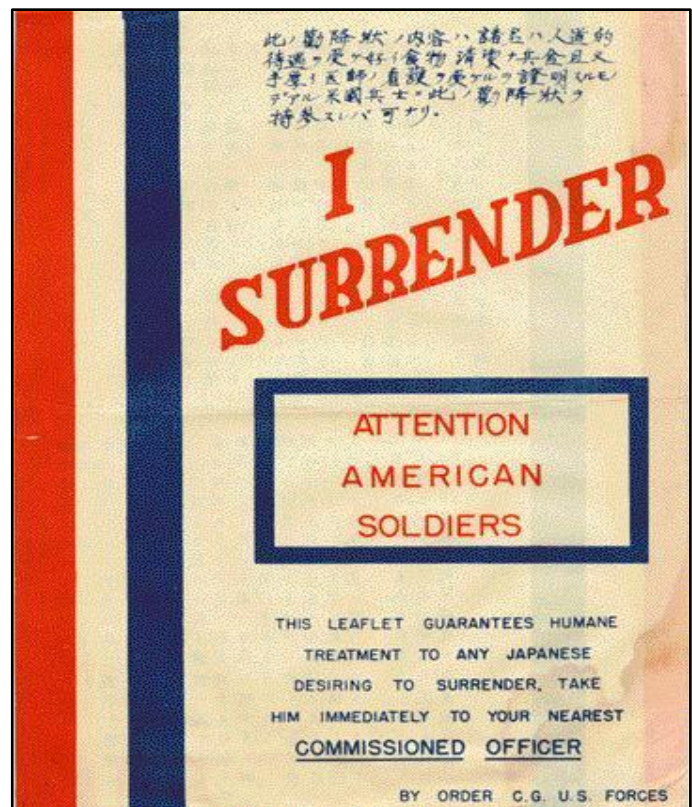
The US military plays a critical role in "winning the peace." This extends from senior leadership all the way down to junior enlisted members on the tactical edge. Training and education are the most important enablers in this mission: soldiers who can quickly assess demanding, ambiguous situations and then react appropriately are of tremendous value in a situation like a collapsing DPRK. They will build trust and relationships between themselves, surrendering KPA soldiers, and DPRK civilians, and in doing so save thousands of lives while setting the stage for a successful reconstruction effort.

### *At the Tactical Level*

Troops on the tactical edge will, in many cases, have first contact with DPRK civilians or surrendering KPA soldiers. They will make the majority of the high-pressure, time-sensitive decisions that may have strategic and political consequences. Developing soldiers and lower-echelon leaders able to quickly and correctly assess situations, then react appropriately, grants a substantial advantage in developing the trust and cooperation necessary for a successful transition to stability operations. Communication is the most important enabler for these soldiers, as having a good understanding of important local language terms, plus access to competent and trustworthy translators, is the best way to facilitate positive interactions. Lower-echelon soldiers and leaders should also be trained on important aspects of processing large numbers of prisoners, as well as dealing with large numbers of sick and starving people. A unit that suddenly or unexpectedly receives large numbers of surrendering KPA soldiers or refugees can quickly become overwhelmed.

### *At the Operational Level*

Training and education at the operational level must focus on senior leaders and staff making challenging decisions in the face of scarce resources. Decisionmaking during high-intensity operations is relatively straightforward: Do everything possible to ensure the units in your command can decisively engage and defeat the enemy. However, as decisive operations transition to follow-on phases, commanders face challenging decisions about how to allocate resources between combat missions, sustainment missions, humanitarian missions, and security missions. To develop this decision-making capability, staff exercises, warfighter exercises, and experiments should include scenarios where commanders face difficult decisions about whether to prioritize, for instance, a local humanitarian crisis occurring in their area of operations, or ongoing combat operations elsewhere. Operational-level commands must



**Figure 13. One of the millions of flyers distributed through Japanese territory as a part of WWII information operations, attempting to diminish the effects of Japanese propaganda and encourage Japanese troops to surrender**

also drill heavily on information operations (IO): focused and well-timed IO targeting key threat leaders may bring about peaceful surrender rather than continued futile resistance. Similarly, effective local IO can radically altered behavior of threatened people despite long-term indoctrination, threats, and violence by the outgoing regime.

#### *At the Strategic Level.*

Much of the focus at the highest echelons must be on facilitating operations between the military, nonmilitary governmental organizations, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). The military is, ultimately, a tool best employed to prevail in combat, not as a humanitarian concern. The military can, however, enable other organizations to perform their missions or jobs more effectively by providing services such as security or sustainment across an area of operations. Historically, cooperation between the military and non-military organizations is somewhat troubled; developing habitual relationships between organizations and establishing key relationships before hostilities take place can help to smooth this transition. In addition, high-level leaders should emphasize a realistic and practical view of KPA soldiers and DPRK civilians throughout their commands: analysts must provide accurate depictions of threat morale and mindset and subordinate commanders should account for these local conditions when planning their operations.

### **Conclusion**

The prospect of a high-intensity conflict on the Korean Peninsula is a daunting one. Winning the shooting war is a huge task, but effectively transitioning to stability operations is arguably an even larger one. A critical component of “winning the peace” in a contemporary Korean War is having a realistic and useful frame of reference of the KPA and DPRK civilians. This enables US and allied soldiers to react appropriately when facing challenging and ambiguous situations. Though it is not the first-line mission of the US military, responding adequately to the inevitable humanitarian crisis that will grip the DPRK following a shooting war will be a huge step towards “winning the peace”—eventually re-unifying the Koreas and reconstructing what will no doubt be a war-torn land, one filled not with fanatics refusing to abandon the regime but, rather, with millions of starving, desperate people wanting nothing more than food and safety.

### **Figure Credits**

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Banner: Xinhua. [“DPRK displays submarine-launched ballistic missile at military parade.”](#) 15 April 2017. Modified by ACE-TI.

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### **Notes**

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The screenshot shows the ATN (Army Training Network) website interface. The header includes the ATN logo and the tagline "Training Solutions to Stay Army Strong". Below the header is a navigation bar with links: Home, myFavorites, ATN A-Z, Unit Training Management, myTraining, Videos, Links, Collaborate, and Help. A search bar is also present. The main content area features several sections, including "Home Station Training Enablers", "CoE & Proponent Training Pages", and "HQDA and MACOM Training Guidance". A red arrow points to the "OE/OPFOR Publications" link under the "CoE & Proponent Training Pages" section. Below this, a detailed description of the publications is provided.

**1** <https://atn.army.mil>

**2** Scroll down and Click

**3** Click and select file

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