

# A VISION FOR 2021 AND BEYOND



1ST TO OBSERVE  
1ST TO INFLUENCE  
1ST TO COMPETE

1ST SPECIAL FORCES COMMAND - AIRBORNE

AUGUST 2021

The military problem we face is defeating multiple layers of stand-off in all domains in order to maintain the coherence of our operations.

Therefore, the American way of war must evolve and adapt.

- GEN Milley, CSA  
- TRADOC PAM 525-3-1: MDO

The 2018 National Defense Strategy was clear in its call to shake off strategic atrophy

- to maintain competitive advantage against our Nation's adversaries we must evolve... To succeed, we must exhibit leadership agility and adaptability. We must question our assumptions.

- LTG Beaudette, USASOC CG  
- USASOC STRATEGY

## COMMAND TEAM FOREWORD




The 2018 National Defense Strategy articulates the need to shift towards Great Power Competition. While the fight against Violent Extremism persists, we must also turn our attention to near-peer adversaries who closed the gap on our Nation's competitive advantages over the last two decades.

Despite these changes, the fundamental nature of our fight remains the same. The Irregular Warfare Annex to the 2018 NDS highlights that Irregular Warfare is inextricably linked to national security in the modern era. Our vision supports this enduring concept, which is foundational to our fight and is anticipated to remain an integral part of future National Defense Strategies as well. As masters of IW, we have always risen to the challenge - and we will continue to do so in the future. Just as our formations played an enormous role in the counterterrorism and counter-insurgency fights of the previous two decades, our role in competition will be crucial to set the conditions for success.

We will continue to serve as strategic sensors and members of influence networks which enable JIIM partners to impose costs on our adversaries in multiple domains, and set the conditions to win on any battlefield should deterrence fail.

To expand our competitive advantage, we must embrace revolutionary change needed to compete, deter and win against near-peer adversaries in an increasingly complex environment. We must focus our attention towards innovation that enables Convergence, Force Development, and CONUS-Based Operational Support. This vision lays the groundwork for how we will adapt to be the First to Observe, First to Influence, and First to Compete in 2021 and beyond.

  
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Commanding

  
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## COMMANDER'S VISION

The Nation's Premier Partnership Force – In the return to Great Power Competition, 1st Special Forces Command (Airborne) serves as the Nation's global partner of choice for Irregular Warfare, that operates as strategic sensors and influence networks using an indigenous approach. Working with our Joint, Inter-agency, Inter-governmental and Multinational (JIIM) partners, we are the first to observe our adversaries' actions, the first to influence target audiences, and the first to compete with those who wish to harm our Nation.

## MISSION STATEMENT

1st Special Forces Command (Airborne) assigns, equips, trains, certifies, and validates Army Special Operations Forces Soldiers and units to conduct global special operations in support of theater and national objectives. On order, 1st Special Forces Command (Airborne) deploys as the Army core of the Special Operations Joint Task Force (SOJTF) HQs to command and control special operations, and/or coalition forces in support of global crisis response and contingency missions.



# STRATEGIC CONTEXT

## BALANCED FOCUS

Our national focus on defeating Violent Extremist Organizations (VEO) over the last two decades allowed our strategic competitors to close the gap with our Nation's military capabilities. As rogue regimes and VEOs continue to destabilize regions and near-peer opponents increasingly undermine long-established international order, our national leaders have shifted their primary national security efforts back to interstate strategic competition, while balancing continued Counter-VEO requirements.

## ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLEXITIES

The accelerating complexity of the global strategic environment complicates the shift to GPC. Rapid technological and organizational advancements that changed the character of warfare also created ambiguous conditions where military, political, informational, and economic realms overlap and where all domains can be contested simultaneously. The environment's complexities allow adversaries – using manipulation, coercion, and deception – to compete for partnerships balanced against U.S. interests and deny access to U.S. Forces.

2001



2021



We are uniquely organized, manned, trained, and resourced to operate in complex and ambiguous environments. Our soldiers, from three interdependent regiments, operate in small teams around the globe strengthening relationships with our partners and allies.

- BG Marks  
1st SFC (A) DCG



## WHO WE ARE



- » We are the Nation's Army Special Operations Division composed of 23,000 Civil Affairs, Psychological Operations, Special Forces, Support Soldiers, and Civilians who continuously compete with our adversaries across the globe simultaneously in 70 countries by leveraging capabilities that span all five operational domains: land, maritime, air, space, and cyberspace.
- » We are quiet professionals, unconventional warriors, masters of the indigenous approach, and leaders who are uniquely educated and trained as regional and cultural experts to successfully operate in complex, austere, and politically sensitive environments to support or counter resistance movements. As America's only dedicated full-spectrum Unconventional Warfare force, 1st Special Forces Command provides a potent and threatening weapon against authoritarian adversaries in Great Power Competition.
- » Our culture is one of constant innovation and improvement. We seek the best people, the most modern equipment, and the most effective methods in order to achieve success. As the world evolves, we quickly maneuver and adapt to anticipate and solve our Nation's most wicked problems. Our country, our Allies, and our partners rely on us to excel in ambiguous environments, overcome challenging conditions, influence, and win — whether on the battlefield, online, or in competition with our collective adversaries. We are the global partners of choice.

## SOF TRUTHS

- » Humans are more important than hardware.
- » Quality is better than quantity.
- » Special operations forces cannot be mass produced.
- » Competent special operations forces cannot be created after emergencies occur.
- » Most special operations require non-SOF support.

# WHAT WE DO

Through in-depth understanding of the operational environment across multiple domains, we provide national decision-makers with options to counter our adversaries' activities, leverage, and influence. Due to our persistently deployed, interconnected posture, with support from our CONUS-base, we serve as strategic sensors and influence networks against those who seek to undermine our partnerships and challenge our military advantage across the threat spectrum—from great powers to VEO threats. We build partnerships through trust, habitual relationships, and a professionalism that undercuts our adversaries' attempts to manipulate. We deter conflict by out-maneuvering our adversaries across multiple domains simultaneously by constantly expanding our physical access and influence. If war becomes unavoidable, we then continue to leverage a robust network of JIIM partners and surrogates to produce effects against adversaries in complex, austere, and sensitive environments that set the conditions for victory by the Joint Force.



- » **Civil Affairs** Soldiers engage with local populations and governments to observe, identify, and exploit civil-military opportunities to gain popular support for USG and partner-nation governance objectives.



- » **Psychological Operations** Soldiers are the Army's experts in influence, using both traditional and modern means of communication to shape the attitudes and behaviors of select foreign audiences.



- » **Special Forces** Soldiers, or Green Berets, are the Nation's experts in the indigenous approach who shape the environment and specialize in supporting or defeating resistance movements.



- » **The Special Operations Sustainment Brigade** supports each regiment with world-class intelligence, logistics, signal, and medical capabilities that allow our forces to operate freely around the world.

Soldiers from our three interdependent Army Special Operations regiments operate in small cross-functional teams that strengthen partner and Allied relationships and complement our partners' efforts.

“ We are vital across the entire spectrum of conflict. We have to train for large-scale combat operations even though we work to prevent them. With partners, we operate with a very small footprint that doesn't require the U.S. government to send large conventional formations.”

- MG Brennan  
1st SFC (A) CG

We operate alongside the National Mission Force and Inter-agency/Intelligence Community partners to execute discreet, sensitive activities in support of national objectives. Across the formation, the regionally-aligned Special Operations Task Forces and Combined Joint Special Operations Task Forces act as the convergence headquarters in everyday competition and conflict. By combining our unique capabilities into mission-specific cross-functional teams, 1st SFC (A) achieves out-sized effects for the Nation in which the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

The power of our force is the power of combinations and the partners we bring to bear across the JIIM. That is something that other divisions in the Army do not do. It is our value proposition to the Nation. We converge partners at the right time and place to create outsized effects.

- MG Brennan  
1st SFC (A) CG



## THE VALUE WE PROVIDE

### » DIRECT SUPPORT FOR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

As practitioners of Irregular Warfare, our force is uniquely educated to operate in the human dimension of war within complex and austere environments. Our teams operate in small footprints with enduring relationships around the world, providing national decision-makers with advantages in information, intelligence, and influence that generate low-visibility and low-cost options that produce high returns. Our efforts in the competition space and against VEO threats preserve the time and reduce the resources necessary for our Army and Joint Force to prepare for, deploy to, and win the next war. Additionally, we respond to global crises and form the core of a Special Operations Joint Task Force to provide Joint Task Force commanders with one consolidated SOF headquarters.

### » GLOBAL PRESENCE, PERSISTENTLY ENGAGED

Our longstanding regional relationships with security, governance, development, and influence partners enable aggressive networking against revisionist states, rogue regimes, and violent extremist organizations. Not limited to diplomatic zones or capital cities, our expertise and presence at the frontiers, along borders, and within weak states ensures we are the first to see and sense subversive attempts to gain leverage and advantage against our Nation.

### » ADVISE, ASSIST, AND ENABLE PARTNERS

Our ability to identify, report, and exploit adversary activities enables multi-domain options for JIIM partners to compete, deter, resist, and impose costs on our opponents. Should competition escalate into conflict, we provide uniquely tailorable partnered options to strike deep cognitively, virtually, and physically. We shape conditions to disrupt adversaries and create windows of opportunity that enable JIIM partners to dominate and win.



# STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

This framework provides a basic structure and roadmap for how 1st SFC (A) will drive towards our vision for FY21 and beyond. It is composed of 4 Lines of Effort and 5 Current Priorities. The 1st SFC (A) staff, organized into focused Operational Planning Teams with input from the CSUs, USASOC, and SOCOM, is developing a detailed strategy which will provide greater fidelity on the tasks, intermediate objectives, and assessments associated with this framework.

## LINES OF EFFORT

Our four lines of effort are enduring and drive alignment of our actions and resources to achieve intermediate objectives in pursuit of our end state – to be the Nation's Premier Partnership Force.

- » **PEOPLE** are our most precious resource. 1st SFC (A) fields the most capable, diverse, and professional Special Operations Forces in the world. We reinforce a culture of accountability and teamwork and empower leaders through Trust and Mission Command. We are successful when we employ a cross functional team of quiet professionals, with the highest ethical and moral values to succeed in the most complex, ambiguous environments. We execute ARSOF talent management to recruit and retain the highest quality Soldiers and Civilians the Nation has to offer and invest in programs that ensure the welfare of the Force and their Families.
- » **READINESS** 1st SFC (A) builds readiness every day. We employ purpose-built, validated, cross functional teams designed to dominate our adversaries through convergence of our unique capabilities across multiple domains. We pursue competitive advantage daily through rigorous, leader-centric training to deploy a diverse team-of-teams trained and validated to compete, deter, and win in conflict. We procure mission critical equipment to properly resource our Forces for operational requirements, while aggressively pursuing the next generation of technology to succeed in the Information Age. We project capability through deployable command nodes and provide expeditionary Special Operations Task Forces to meet the needs of the Geographic Combatant Commanders (GCCs).
- » **INNOVATION** 1st SFC (A) invests in equipment, processes, and approaches that advance ARSOF into the Information Age. While modernization improves existing capabilities, innovation develops new methods and technologies needed to succeed in the future operating environment. Through a broad network with academia, industry, the interagency, and the greater SOCOM enterprise, we re-envision our formation and capabilities in novel ways to enable Convergence, Force Development, and CONUS-Based Operational Support. As one of SOCOM's primary Research, Testing, Development, and Evaluation partners, we are uniquely postured to exploit technological inflection points to give our Soldiers revolutionary capability at the point of need and to share success with the wider enterprise.
- » **RELATIONSHIPS** As the Nation's Premier Partnership Force, relationships are interwoven into everything we do. The Irregular Warfare space is large and complex, and no single entity can achieve success without help from a variety of partners. 1st SFC (A) leverages organic cultural and regional expertise to build relationships and broaden networks across the JIIM enterprise. We are collaborative team-builders, using our global understanding and placement to create opportunities for change. We leverage authorities and capabilities of our partners to optimize effects and create overmatch to achieve mission objectives.

We are modernizing all of our regiments. We have to restructure and reequip all of our formations to make them more pertinent in an A2/AD environment, to fight near-peer competitors. We also have a critical role in helping national leaders understand what's going on at the grassroots level.

- MG Brennan  
1st SFC (A) CG



## ARSOF Core Tasks

- Unconventional Warfare
- Civil Affairs Operations
- Military Information Support Operations
- Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction
- Counterinsurgency
- Counterterrorism
- Foreign Humanitarian Assistance
- Foreign Internal Defense
- Preparation of the Environment
- Security Force Assistance
- Special Reconnaissance
- Direct Action



1st SFC (A) is the only DoD organization that provides Unconventional Warfare capabilities

## CURRENT PRIORITIES

The title of “Nation’s Premier Partnership Force” is aspirational and not simply bestowed upon us – we must earn it! 1st SFC (A) has five priority efforts that will set initial conditions for the command to be successful as the Nation’s primary force for competition against our adversaries. These priorities will shift over time as we achieve our goals, but this is where we must focus NOW.

### » INFORMATION WARFARE CENTER (IWC)

The IWC is a CONUS-based, operationally-focused standing task force designed to support GCCs, TSOCs, and JIIM partners to identify, expose, exploit, and disrupt adversary influence campaigns. The IWC integrates cross functional capabilities from Psychological Operations, Intelligence, Cyber, Information Operations, and other Information-Related Capabilities to mass effects against global competitors in the Information Environment.

### » SPECIAL OPERATIONS JOINT TASK FORCE - CONTINGENCY (SOJTF-C)

1st SFC (A) establishes SOJTF-C to act as a convergence headquarters, at echelon above brigade, which provides expeditionary campaigning in times of crisis and conflict, enabling mission command for Joint/Combined SOF. 1st SFC(A) forms the core of the SOJTF-C and sets the conditions necessary to seize the initiative and retain freedom of action for the Joint Force. The SOJTF-C creates synergy across all domains to converge combat power, including ARSOF Cross Functional Teams at echelon, to disrupt and defeat the physical, virtual, and cognitive cohesion of the adversary. While the formation’s regionally aligned O-5/O-6-level SOTFs and CJSOTFs are the convergence headquarters in everyday competition and conflict, SOJTF-C enables mission command during times of additional need that are caused by a crisis.

### » CROSS-FUNCTIONAL TEAMS (CFT)

1st SFC (A) Cross Functional Teams provide SOF with its competitive advantage. CFTs at all echelons combine the unique capabilities of Civil Affairs, Psychological Operations, Special Forces, and enablers to rapidly integrate multi-domain capabilities that create layered options across time and space.

### » HARD TARGET DEFEAT COMPANIES (HTD)

1st SFC (A) develops and provides hyper-enabled teams that are empowered, equipped, and networked to support high-end Partners and Allies across the spectrum of special operations. Hard Target Defeat Companies possess multi-domain capabilities to obtain access to and defeat enemy hard targets. They operate with regional partners to defeat these hard targets in sensitive and denied environments to enable the Joint Force to achieve overmatch.



## » **SOF TRAINING CENTER (SOF-TC)**

The SOF-TC is the premier warfighting training venue for ARSOF. It is a scalable, flexible venue to test, train, certify, and validate units against a variety of contingencies and missions in an A2/AD multi-domain environment. Using the SOF-TC as a base of operations, 1st SFC (A) executes realistic, challenging training scenarios from decentralized locations to replicate geographic dispersion and operational reach back that enables mission command. The 1st SFC (A) will continue to invest with our partners to ensure the multi-domain training environment – that includes Space, Cyber, network development, and EW capabilities — remains current.

## **US ARMY CONCEPT FOR SPECIAL OPERATIONS 2028-2040**

ARSOF conduct special operations during competition and conflict, as part of the joint force commander's campaign plan, to mitigate risk, deter, disrupt, or defeat hostile aggression, and gain time in order to set up strategic and operational options. By expanding partnerships with local irregular forces Army special operations allow the joint force to sense and create a picture of the adversary's layered standoff system. When directed, ARSOF penetrate denied areas to disintegrate enemy anti-access systems thereby producing multiple physical, virtual, and cognitive dilemmas.

# CROSS-FUNCTIONAL TEAM



## CIVIL AFFAIRS

**CA** forces are essential to the success of all missions that occur near, among, or with civilian populations, governments, or inter-organizational partners. Underpinning all CA capabilities is a comprehensive sociocultural understanding of the operating environment. Special operations Civil Affairs forces conduct preparation of the environment, support to unconventional warfare, foreign internal defense, and civil network development and engagement (CNDE) across the competition continuum. CNDE is the process by which Civil Affairs forces engage, evaluate, develop, and integrate civil networks and their capabilities into operations. Cultural orientation, regional expertise, linguistic capabilities, advisory skills, and civil network development expertise distinguish CA forces from other entities on the battlefield. In the cross-functional team model, SOF CA may take the lead during cooperation and post-conflict consolidation of gains.

### CIVIL AFFAIRS SUPPORT TO PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS AND SPECIAL FORCES

CNDE is key to support both PO and SF. Through CNDE, CA can assist PO counterparts through targeting of influence activities and provide access to populations for information delivery during UW, FID, or PE. CA further enables MISO by identifying civil partners for establishing influence networks and coordinating projects in support of shaping perceptions and behavior, then assessing the effects of those efforts.

CA support to Special Forces stems heavily from CNDE. For SF, CA provides multiple inputs into the targeting cycle for both kinetic and non-kinetic effects. CA can recommend targets for SF engagement, including direct action, by providing information and analysis on friendly and adversary centers of gravity, decisive points, and critical links and nodes within the civil component of the operating environment. CA can mitigate undesirable second- and third-order effects by populating no-strike/restricted target lists with politically or culturally sensitive sites. CA may also provide SF with access and placement for target engagement.

# MODEL

In both competition and conflict, special operations formations provide unique capabilities empowering ARSOF and DOD to compete, fight, and win. Across the competition continuum, Civil Affairs (CA), Psychological Operations (PO), and Special Forces (SF), along with enablers such as Cyber, EW, and Space, contribute in distinctive, yet mutually supporting, ways. No one branch leads the cross-functional team; the model is agile and adaptable, allowing operational requirements to determine the lead and supporting elements at any point during the operation. The cross-functional team is strongest when each element has a robust understanding of the others' capabilities, requirements, and limitations.



# PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS

PO forces conduct Military Information Support Operations (MISO) in permissive, uncertain, and hostile environments to change the behavior of foreign audiences—both friendly and adversarial—in support of US objectives. PO forces analyze select audiences by determining critical vulnerabilities and accessibilities of the targeted population's information conduit and thinking. PO shapes the informational and cognitive dimension of operating environments by creating information campaigns that shape and challenge established perception frameworks. PO is integrated across all special operations core activities, including UW, FID, and COIN. In addition, PO forces conduct PE activities by creating favorable conditions for friendly force operations. PO forces can incorporate Military Deception (MILDEC) operations by disrupting and exploiting adversarial decision-making cycles. In the cross-functional team model, PO can lead the mission in the cooperation and competition continuums.

## PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS SUPPORT TO CIVIL AFFAIRS AND SPECIAL FORCES

PO forces can analyze select target audiences to ensure that planned Civil Affairs Operations (CAO) are targeting the right vulnerabilities and conduits for achieving desired effects. PO forces create and disseminate supporting information narratives to accompany CA projects and programs, amplifying their influence on targeted population's perceptions. PO also support CA through Counter-Adversary Information Activities (C-AIA)—which include disinformation and propaganda—by identifying and mitigating false perceptions of CA initiatives.

PO forces assist SF operations by establishing active and passive support from the targeted population. PO forces isolate and exploit enemy individuals from their adversarial support system and provide psychological effects supporting DA activities. PO forces also conduct human network targeting for both kinetic and non-kinetic effects by identifying and prioritizing key leaders and communicators for SF engagement.



# SPECIAL FORCES

**SF** conduct nine principal tasks: unconventional warfare (UW), foreign internal defense (FID), preparation of the environment, counterinsurgency, security force assistance, special reconnaissance, direct action, counterterrorism, and counterproliferation. Of these, its two primary missions are UW and FID. In UW, SF works with and through resistance movements to coerce, disrupt, or overthrow occupying powers. FID entails partnership with friendly governments to strengthen regional or area security through a wide range of military-to-military engagement activities. Although conventional forces can also conduct some of the principal tasks, SF provides a unique capability by using specialized formations, tactics, techniques, and procedures. SF discreetly shapes the operating environment in both peace and complex uncertainty. In the cross-functional team model, SF would typically take the lead in conflict.

## SPECIAL FORCES SUPPORT TO CIVIL AFFAIRS AND PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS

Special Forces support their Civil Affairs teammates by providing options to address certain civil vulnerabilities, especially those related to security. This can achieve several effects in support of CAO, including providing CA forces with initial access to previously denied areas, or enabling consolidation of gains post-conflict. Such support also contributes to CA influence operations by potentially resolving or exploiting grievances among civil populations.

In support of PO, Special Forces can create tangible effects to accompany messaging efforts, increasing narrative credibility. Effects may be either lethal or nonlethal, including activities like training exercises with partner militaries or kinetic engagement of targets. Such activities, when performed in conjunction with MISO, strengthen, verify, and legitimize PO narratives among the local populace, which in turn increases influence over target audiences. Special Forces also conduct such activities in support of military deception operations.



1st SFC (A) formations – Civil Affairs, Psychological Operations, and Special Forces – each contribute unique and specialized capabilities to TSOC and GCC operations. Though remarkable on their own merits, these capabilities are best leveraged through sequential and/or simultaneous combinations of each other's strengths in a CFT methodology. Doing so achieves outsized effects on cognitive, military, and civil realms, by means of a small operational force.

# THE ART OF RESISTANCE

As masters of the art of resistance, Army Special Operations Forces work with partners to anticipate, prepare for, and defeat threats ranging from insurgencies to occupying foreign powers. To accomplish this, Civil Affairs, Psychological Operations, and Special Forces conduct activities to support or defeat resistance movements.

ARSOF formations conduct Foreign Internal Defense to improve partner-government capacity to defeat internal stability threats. They further conduct Security Force Assistance, enabling partner nations to resist both internal and external threats. In competition and conflict, ARSOF conduct information warfare to prepare target audiences to support friendly efforts and resist adversaries. ARSOF also conduct Civil Network Development and Engagement to understand, empower, and potentially mobilize civil networks to resist adversaries. In crisis and conflict, ARSOF and JIIM partners conduct Unconventional Warfare and Counter-Unconventional Warfare to enable resistance against governments, occupying powers, and revanchist states.

Each ARSOF tribe plays a critical role in resistance:



» **CIVIL AFFAIRS** formations increase the legitimacy of the resistance or partner government by strengthening bonds with the local populace. This may be accomplished through provision of essential services, outreach and engagement, or other activities. CA can also delegitimize an adversary government or insurgency by identifying civil vulnerabilities for exploitation.



» **PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS** formations advise and assist partner governments/irregular organizations in the execution of PSYACTs to favorably influence target audiences, preparing them to resist the adversary and support friendly operations.



» **SPECIAL FORCES** formations train and assist partner forces, including foreign militaries and irregular organizations, to fight and defeat internal and external threats.

## SUPPORT TO RESISTANCE AGAINST REVANCHIST POWERS IN GREAT POWER COMPETITION

In recent years in the EUCOM AOR, ARSOF formations assisted European partners with development of the multilateral Resistance Operating Concept. The ROC strengthens transatlantic security by empowering partners to counter Russian malign influence, activities, and aggression.

## SUPPORT TO PARTNER GOVERNMENT



SECURITY FORCE ASSISTANCE  
COUNTERPROLIFERATION  
FOREIGN INTERNAL DEFENSE



CIVIL KNOWLEDGE INTEGRATION / CIVIL-MILITARY INTEGRATION  
COUNTER-ADVERSARY INFORMATION ACTIVITIES



PERCEPTION MANAGEMENT

CIVIL NETWORK DEVELOPMENT AND ENGAGEMENT

TRANSITIONAL  
GOVERNANCE

COUNTERTERRORISM  
SPECIAL RECONNAISSANCE  
COUNTER - UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE  
COUNTER-INSURGENCY  
DIRECT ACTION

DECEPTION

COOPERATION

COMPETITION

CRISIS

CONFLICT



PERCEPTION MANAGEMENT  
INFLUENCE ACTIVITIES



CIVIL KNOWLEDGE INTEGRATION / CIVIL-MILITARY INTEGRATION

CIVIL NETWORK DEVELOPMENT AND ENGAGEMENT

TRANSITIONAL  
GOVERNANCE

DECEPTION

COUNTERTERRORISM  
SPECIAL RECONNAISSANCE  
UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE  
DIRECT ACTION

## SUPPORT TO RESISTANCE MOVEMENT



INFORMS



STRATEGIC GUIDANCE

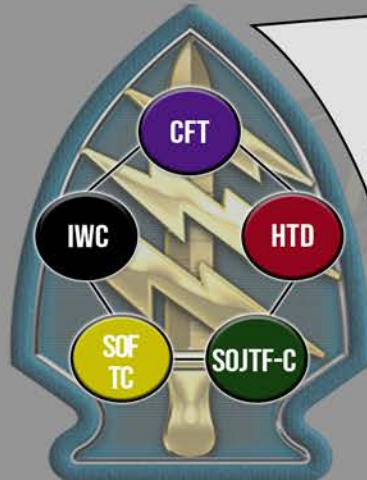
DRIVES CHANGE TO

LEGACY 1ST SFC (A) STRUCTURE AND OPERATIONAL CONCEPT

REQUIRES INVESTMENT IN

PEOPLE  
READINESS  
INNOVATION  
RELATIONSHIPS

TO CREATE



NEW ORGANIZATIONAL BODIES

TO DISSEMINATE

IN ORDER TO EXECUTE

IWC

PSYOP  
MISO  
OSR  
INTEL  
CYBER  
MILDEC

GCC / TSOC



CROSS-FUNCTIONAL TEAM



SOTF /  
CJSOTF

WAYS  
TO  
END

Indigenous Approach:  
Build Partner Capacity  
Build & Strengthen Relationships  
SFAC Coordination

REASSURE PARTNERS AND ALLIES

CAO  
SFA/FID  
PE  
MISO



Sensors to Observe Adversary Actions  
Enable Action Against Proxies  
Enable JIIM Understanding  
Expand SOF Networks  
Global Force Posture

DETER

COOPERATION

COMI

# NATION'S PREMIER PARTNERSHIP FORCE

**JTF**  
JADC2

C2  
INTEL  
FIRES  
MOVEMENT & MANEUVER  
PROTECTION  
SUSTAINMENT  
INFORMATION

**SOJTF-C**  
CONVERGENCE C2  
SPACE EMS CYBER  
LAND INFO  
SEA AIR

SR  
DA  
IO  
COIN  
UW  
CWMD

WAYS

Integrate JIIM  
Converge Multi-Domain  
Capabilities  
Develop Resilient, Capable,  
Interoperable Partners  
Reinforce Partners and Allies

Demonstrate Ability  
To Penetrate Adversary  
Standoff Systems  
Create Virtual &  
Physical Standoff  
Prevent Surprise Attack  
Set Conditions to Win in War

Enable JTF To  
Penetrate, Dis-  
integrate, Exploit  
Adversary A2/AD

WAYS

Information Warfare  
Identify, Expose, Exploit  
& Counter Enemy OAs  
Integrate IRC Capabilities  
Inform & Enable JIIM  
Deep Area Sensing

Cognitively Disrupt Adversaries  
Create Cognitive Standoff  
Deep Area Penetration



Harden the Environment  
Prepare Partners & Allies  
Understanding Adversary Standoff Weapons

ADVERSARIES

ENABLE VICTORY

PETITION

CONFLICT

# II COMPETITION VIGNETTE II



A Civil Affairs (CA) Team acting as a Civil Military Support Element (CMSE) from the 91st Civil Affairs Battalion, on its third tour to West African nation of Naruvu, was on its way to meet with a local government leader. While driving on the highway, the team noticed a billboard with Chinese characters, a photo of a southern port city, and a prominent yellow ribbon. The CMSE took a photo and continued to their meeting.

Upon returning to their team house, they shared the photo with their cross-functional team (a Special Forces Operational Detachment-Alpha (SFOD-A) from the 3rd Special Forces Group and a Psychological Operations Detachment (PSYDET) from the 7th Psychological Operations Battalion). Recognizing the billboard's near-peer competition significance, they developed a plan to investigate the Chinese activity: Each element would gather information from their respective indigenous partners in Security, Governance, Development and Information while also exploring local publically available information.

When the CFT reconvened after their reconnaissance efforts, the SFODA's assistant detachment commander mentioned the Naruvian Commando Team Leader (a long-time acquaintance) stated high-level Chinese officials recently visited to discuss large-scale real estate investment. At a local development meeting, the CMSE learned the Chinese purchased land around the southern port city. The PSYOP detachment located advertisements on local social media outlets signaling Chinese interests in the port area. Recognizing the significance, the cross-functional team transmitted their findings through SOCAFRICA to the 8th PSYOP Group's Information Warfare Center (IWC) at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

As 1st Special Forces Commands' CONUS-based information warfare capability, the IWC leveraged the global 1st SFC (A) network to illuminate the threat activity. They rapidly integrated the 389th Intelligence Battalion's all-source intelligence against the Chinese investment in Naruvu. Assisted by sophisticated artificial intelligence and machine learning, within 48-hours the IWC found the original source of the advertisements – a Chinese construction conglomerate active in Naruvu over the last two years. The advertisement announced a deep-water port that would begin construction in just over a month. It further confirmed the port as a key node in China's Belt and Road Initiative for 2025 and likely naval military intentions in 2035.

The IWC immediately developed an influence campaign to enable JIIM partners to discredit Chinese activities several weeks before the ribbon cutting ceremony and impede the Chinese from further purchasing land. SOCAFRICA directed the CFT to monitor and report on Chinese activities.

Naruvian government cooperation was key to stopping port establishment and to inhibit further Chinese expansion. With ground breaking less than 1 month away and American diplomats needing more time to persuade the Naruvian leadership against Chinese investment, SOCAFRICA requested assistance from SOJTF-C. Working from Ft Bragg, NC, SOJTF-C developed a plan and established mission command to converge SOF capabilities on the problem.

They first directed the IWC to initiate their previously-developed influence campaign. Relying on civil-economic information provided by the CMSE, the IWC's approach empowered IWTF's, in coordination with the JIIM, to enflame long-standing friction between Naruvian workers and Chinese corporations. Within days, protests supported by the CFT's ODA, erupted around Chinese business headquarters and their embassy in Ajuba. Simultaneously, the IWC-led social media campaign illuminated the controversy to a global audience.

SOJTF-C activated the CMSE who, working with local branches of the Naruvian government, DoS, USAID, and NGOs, established job fairs near protest areas, providing disaffected workers with alternative employment options. Within two weeks, the construction company lost 60% of its required labor pool.

With increased scrutiny from the international community, and without a workforce, China's port opening was set back by months. The JIIM now had sufficient time to engage with Naruvian leadership, communicate the problem, and develop options.

One week later, Naruvian security forces discovered an illegal weapons cache which it traced back to a subsidiary of the construction company. To further investigate the matter, they partnered with 3rd SFG (A)'s Hard Target Defeat Company (HTD) to surveil the construction company's headquarters. Enabled by the HTD, Naruvian security forces accessed the building and, while searching it, recovered blueprints for the proposed port facility.

Naruvu sent the recovered blueprints to DIA analysts who identified plans for concrete footings specifically designed for CSA-9 surface-to-air and DF-25 shore-to-ship missiles. These missiles, if emplaced in Naruvu, would challenge America's air and sea lanes across the Atlantic. Armed with this information, the US Ambassador explained if China emplaced those weapons at the port, Naruvu would become a strategic target and potential war zone between great powers. China's true intent illuminated, the Naruvian government seized the Chinese-purchased land.

Though the US thwarted China's expansion and military plans, it was certain China would try to achieve the same goals in the future. Thankfully, ARSOF's forward presence in multiple regions would provide advanced warning of their activities, provide the ability to disrupt them, and, if necessary, set conditions for the US to win in conflict.

1st to Observe. 1st to Influence. 1st to Compete.

# 1ST SPECIAL FORCES

## OUR COMMAND



23,000 People



11 Subordinate  
Brigade-Sized  
Units



1st SFG(A)  
INDO-PACOM



3rd SFG(A)  
AFRICOM



5th SFG(A)  
CENTCOM



7th SFG(A)  
SOUTHCOM



10th SFG(A)  
EUCOM



19th SFG(A)



20th SFG(A)



4th POG(A)  
Regional Focus



8th POG(A)  
Global Focus



95th CA  
BDE (A)



528th Sust  
BDE (SO)

## Our Mission:

1st Special Forces Command (Airborne) assigns, equips trains, certifies, and validates Army Special Operations Forces Soldiers & units to conduct global special operations in support of theater & national objectives. On order, 1st Special Forces Command (Airborne) deploys as the Army core of the Special Operations Joint Task Force (SOJTF) HQs to execute command and control of special operations and/or forces in support of global crisis response missions.

## OUR STRATEGIC VALUE

Cooperation

Competition

Conflict

Regionally-Aligned with  
Persistent Global  
Presence

Uniquely educated and trained  
for human-governance-  
information dimensions of war

Enable Multi-Domain  
options for JIIM partners  
to defeat VEOs and impose  
costs on adversaries

**WE ARE UNIQUELY TRAINED, RESOURCED, AND POSTURED TO  
COMPETE ON BEHALF OF THE NATION, ACROSS THE SPECTRUM OF CONFLICT**



**Special Forces**  
*Indigenous Approach*



*Operational Detachment-Alpha*



**Civil Affairs**  
*Populations & Governance*



*Civil Affairs Team*



**Psychological Operations**  
*Experts in Influence*



*Psychological  
Operations Detachment*



**Special Operations Sust.**  
*Enabling Operations Globally*



Logistics



Communications



Intelligence



Medical Support

**CROSS-FUNCTIONAL TEAMS**

# THE NATION'S PREMIER

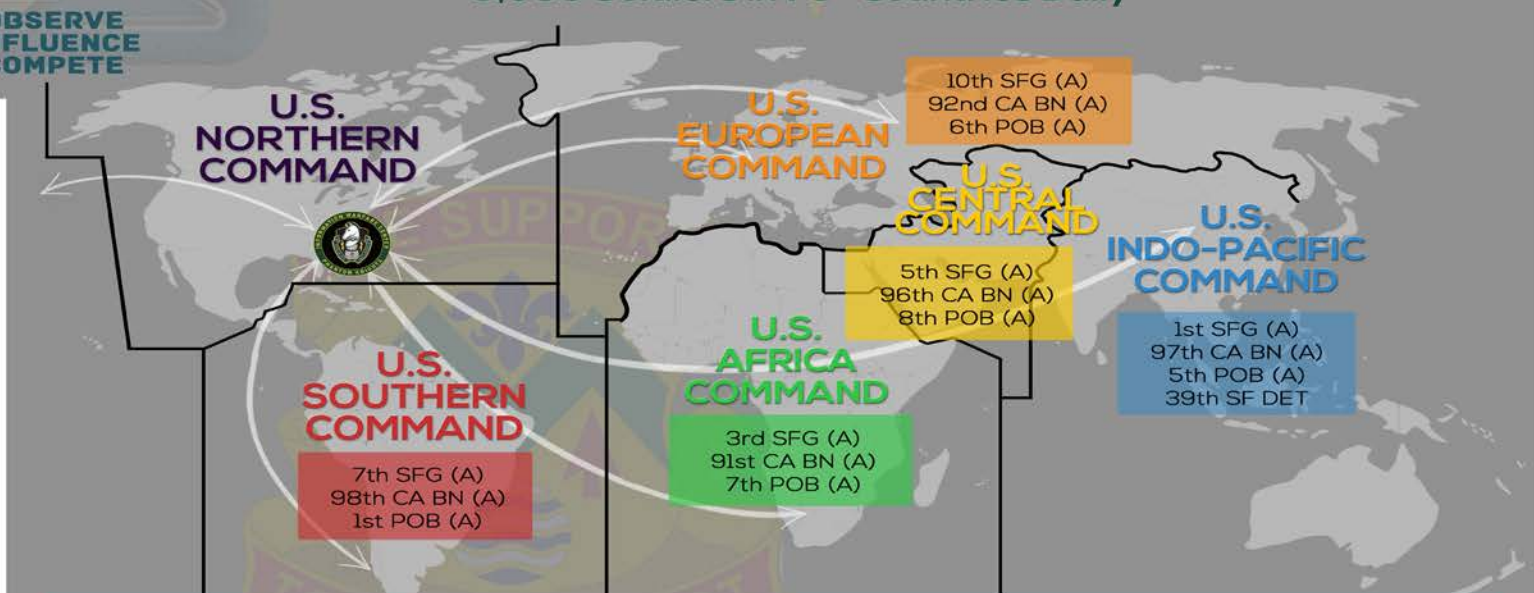
# COMMAND (AIRBORNE)

## BASING



## PERSISTENT GLOBAL PRESENCE

~3,000 Soldiers in 70+ Countries Daily



**GLOBAL FOCUS:** 19th SFG (A). 20th SFG (A). 3rd POB (A). 9th POB (A)  
389th MI Bn. 112th SIG Bn. 528th STBn.

## PARTNERSHIP FORCE

