

# Executive Summary

*Today it should be clear that not only is weakness provocative, but the perception of weakness on our part can be provocative as well. A conclusion by our enemies that the United States lacks the will or the resolve to carry out missions that demand sacrifice and demand patience is every bit as dangerous as an imbalance of conventional military power.*

—Donald H. Rumsfeld

Alexis de Tocqueville spoke to this problem in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the United States as his point of reference:

*Foreign politics demand scarcely any of those qualities which are peculiar to a democracy; they require, on the contrary, the perfect use of almost all those in which it is deficient. Democracy is favorable to the increase of the internal resources of a state; it diffuses wealth and comfort, promotes public spirit, and fortifies the respect for law in all classes of society: all these are advantages that have only an indirect influence over the relations which one people bears to another. But a democracy can only with great difficulty regulate the details of an important undertaking, persevere in a fixed design, and work out its execution in spite of serious obstacles. It cannot combine its measures with secrecy or await their consequences with patience.<sup>1</sup>*

The information age has arguably worsened—not improved—the ability of the United States to pursue either quietly or patiently a lengthy, complex strategic purpose, such as that mentioned by de Tocqueville. For numerous reasons, America is at a relative disadvantage in the realm of information operations despite its sophisticated capabilities. In addition to the recognized

problem of incentive imbalances and moral consequences in asymmetric war, a costly long-term conflict affords strategic opportunity for spectator states, both friendly and antagonistic. The responsibility of the President of the United States to preserve the lives of U.S. citizens while serving the best long-term interests of the Nation requires the Wisdom of Solomon and the charisma of a great communicator. At stake is public support, the sine qua non for any long-term strategy in a democracy.

On October 24, 2006, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff asserted, “The American people are the center of gravity for our enemies.” Both the Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army and the Commandant of the Marine Corps have spoken to the challenge of a long-term, coherent strategy for the war on terror and requisite public support. According to General Peter Schoomaker, “we need to focus on long-term strategy, but not just for Iraq. When people talk about the ends, ways and means of strategy, they usually focus on the ends and the ways—few understand the actual means and the time required to generate those means.” Separately, General James Conway told Marines at Camp Fallujah that he fears there are two timelines at work: “One is how long it is going to take us to do the job,” and the other is “how long the country

This Forum’s objective is to present a handful of security cooperation challenges and developments that bear scrutiny and demand resources dedicated elsewhere concurrent with the prosecution of the war on terror. Because the topic of our Special Feature is U.S. European Command (USEUCOM), our original intent was to select Forum articles that detail international relations issues within the USEUCOM area of responsibility. An excellent article, however, submitted by Special Operations Command, Pacific, and featured in the last issue, inspired a followup contribution from a professor at the National War College that deals with Southeast Asia.

In an age of “barbarism emboldened by technology,” it is tempting for military thinkers to view the world through the prism of the terror threat, but older and more conventional points of friction, such as relations with Russia and China, are legion. The ability of the United States to engage effectively the vast panorama of emergent international security issues before they become major problems is difficult at the best of times, but doing so during the course of a long, asymmetric conflict requires the careful orchestration of all instruments of national power, economy of force, and persistence.

is going to allow us to do the job. And they're not syncing up."

An important factor influencing the time and resources dedicated to a strategy is opportunity cost. The U.S. Central Command, for obvious reasons, receives a disproportionate share of forces and resources that would normally be more evenly distributed among the geographic combatant commands for other strategic purposes. Estimating the opportunity costs for the conduct of a generations-long war on terror surely constitutes military art at its most hypothetical. How severe is the strategic risk of paths not taken in global theater security cooperation? Our Forum examines various inputs to this difficult calculus, both current and developing.

In our first Forum installment, Dr. Milan Vego of the Naval War College surveys Russia from the perspective of one who believes that too many U.S. military professionals ceased to study that nation seriously after 1989 and thus are in need of a comprehensive update. The illiberal drift of Russia toward what many consider to be enduring (or in the case of Winston Churchill, inscrutable) national instincts has received much press attention in recent months, and Professor Vego's essay is purposefully broad. The Army War College Strategic Studies Institute recently noted that "a new, improved Russian military establishment is arising" and that it demands to be taken seriously. Professor Vego predicts that there will be serious tension between Russia and the West in the future and that a serious conflict is not out of the question.

The second Forum contribution was solicited after National Defense University Press published Dr. Marvin Ott's thought-provoking Strategic Forum No. 222 for the Institute for National Strategic Studies (the Strategic Forum series is available for download at [ndupress.ndu.edu](http://ndupress.ndu.edu)). In the last issue of *JFQ*, Major General David Fridovich and Lieutenant Colonel Fred Krawchuk wrote of the need for a comprehensive approach to combating terror in Southeast Asia. Dr. Ott was generous in his willingness to complement the U.S. Special Operations Command, Pacific, "indirect approach" with an article providing additional context to the challenge of countering support for terror groups within sovereign countries. The author asserts that the longstanding U.S. regional presence in Southeast Asia lacks a comprehensive

security strategy addressing a pervasive sense of Muslim grievance exploited by jihadists. He also argues for a serious treatment of the Chinese strategic challenge in Southeast Asia.

China features even more prominently in our third Forum article, which outlines Sino economic, military, and political activities in Africa—especially in the littorals. At a time when the United States is studying the requirement for a geographic combatant command dedicated to Africa, the Chinese are forging deep ties with many African nations to secure access to markets and the continent's vast natural resources. Colonel Gordon Magenheimer argues that U.S. force projection capabilities are heavily dependent on the availability of modern seaports to accommodate the largest classes of commercial shipping. He further speculates that African seaport operators may be reluctant to invite Chinese ire or risk disrupting normal port operations in favor of U.S. interests in times of crisis.

Our final entry in the Forum also includes a maritime focus, in this case the African Gulf of Guinea, which was recently declared a U.S. strategic national interest. The nations located in this region include Nigeria, the largest oil producer in Africa, which sends half of its oil to the United States. Within 13 years, Nigerian oil production is expected to exceed the total oil output of all Persian Gulf countries. Amid the region's vast wealth are persistent challenges such as disease, corruption, and the drug trade—all of which demand interagency cooperation, not military solutions. For those challenges that *do* lend themselves to U.S. theater security cooperation, Lieutenant Commander Patrick Paterson argues that the U.S. Navy's improved littoral capabilities seem ideally suited and prescient. The Gulf of Guinea is a region that Americans will become well acquainted with in the years to come.

In this issue's Special Feature section, we examine the only geographic combatant command with a wholly forward-based headquarters. USEUCOM interacts with 92 countries, including the 26 members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Although the USEUCOM footprint in Europe is smaller than in the past, the scope of its activities has increased, just as NATO itself is becoming an organization capable of projecting security. General Bantz Craddock leads off our examination of his command and area of responsibility with an interview focused on

the challenges that have inspired a new theater strategy. The interview includes a discussion of NATO, the much anticipated U.S. Africa Command, and of course, Afghanistan.

Today there are more than 60 countries working in Afghanistan to promote stability and reconstruction. Of these, 26 NATO and 11 non-NATO countries have military forces on the ground. This is a departure from NATO's formative years as a "reactive alliance," where forces were not funded or logistically equipped to operate more than a few hundred miles from home. With more than 50,000 troops engaged in activities on three continents, such as the mission in Afghanistan, member nations have reportedly been dismayed by attendant costs, which under NATO's "costs fall where they lie" principle, are not evenly distributed. At the NATO Summit in Prague 4 years ago, it was generally agreed that member nations would contribute a minimum of 2 percent of their gross domestic product to national security. Today, only seven countries in the Alliance meet that goal, making this commitment appear less of a floor and more of a ceiling.

Shortly after relinquishing command of U.S. European Command to General Craddock, General James Jones spoke publicly about his experiences as the commander of USEUCOM and as Supreme Allied Commander, Europe. He noted that the resources that our NATO partners invest in national defense are shrinking while their political will to act is increasing. He called this situation "a train wreck waiting to happen." Similar views were expressed by former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld in his farewell address on December 15, 2006: "Ours is . . . a world of many friends and allies, but sadly, realistically, friends and allies with declining defense investment and declining capabilities, and . . . with increasing vulnerabilities. All of which require that the United States of America invest more."

As an investment of your time, we hope that you find this issue of *JFQ* thought-provoking. We encourage your feedback, hopefully in the form of manuscripts delineating your lessons learned in joint, integrated operations. **JFQ**

—D.H. Gurney

#### NOTE

<sup>1</sup> Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations* (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 1993), 160.