



NATIONAL DEFENSE COLLEGE OF THE PHILIPPINES

PRESIDENT'S PAPERS:
THE FUTURE
OF PHILIPPINE
WARFARE VOL II

President's Message

"What we can afford least is to define the problem of future war as we would like it to be, and by doing so, introduce into our defense vulnerabilities based on self-delusion"

- LtGen H R McMaster (Ret), former US National Security Adviser

We live in an era of unprecedented change and disruption in the regional and global security order. As the quote above from US LtGen McMaster states plainly, we cannot afford self-delusion when thinking and preparing for the future of warfare. With the security environment in flux, defense thinkers and strategists must constantly be on the lookout for trends that would shape warfare and affect the outlook of Philippine security and defense. It is in this context that the National Defense College of the Philippines (NDCP), in partnership with the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), pursued the Future of Philippine Warfare Project.

The first volume of the Future of Philippine Warfare sought to incite discussions on what the future of warfare would look like. The papers tackled the proliferation and maturation of emerging technologies, the transformation of the various domains of warfare, the emergence of hybrid warfare, and the changing regional and global dynamics vis-à-vis the Philippines' traditional defense and security focus and postures. It provides the baseline and scenarios on where warfare in the future is headed, and what the Philippines and the AFP must be prepared to face.

Building on this previous work, this second volume aims to reexamine the fundamental theoretical assumptions that underpin our understanding of Philippine defense. The papers provide varying perspectives on the Philippines' 'theory of victory' in face of the likely threats our country may confront in the coming years. It is in NDCP's view that in devising solutions against the technologically advanced and multidimensional threats and challenges of the future, we must countercheck our ideas of what may guarantee our security and deter aggression against our country. Our exploration on the concept of a 'theory of victory' is timely as recent events call into question longstanding beliefs that have justified a more inward defense and security focus, such as complex interdependence among states, and a possible strong international response and condemnation to aggressive acts.



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I sincerely hope that this second volume will encourage and inspire the planners, educators, operators and thinkers of our Armed Forces to further reevaluate our security and deterrence discourse, to prepare the Philippines for the future.

Finally, I would also wish to extend our gratitude to my predecessor, BGen Archimedes H Viaje AFP (Ret), PhD, MNSA, CESE for starting this groundbreaking project, and to Dr Francis C Domingo of the de La Salle University-Manila, and Capt Xylee C Paculba PN (Ret) for their invaluable assistance in the review and refinement of Volume Two's papers.

As you read this volume, I invite you to contemplate upon the words of Dr Jose Rizal on what it takes to achieve victory:

“Filipinos don’t realize that victory is the child of struggle, that joy blossoms from suffering, and redemption is the product of sacrifice”

-Dr Jose Rizal, “Como se Gobiernan las Filipinas”, La Solidaridad

LTGEN FERDINAND M CARTUJANO PAF (RET)

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Introduction to the Volume

The Philippines faces a wide array of defense and security challenges to its sovereignty, territorial integrity, and internal peace and order. Strategizing on how to confront these and other future challenges, amidst strains to our financial resources exacerbated by the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, consumes much of the AFP's intellectual energies and planning. The need to reevaluate and reinvigorate Philippine defense thinking has never been more urgent; the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the proliferation and use of emerging technologies in conflict such in the Nagorno-Karabakh war in 2020 have made it clear that the disaster and war scenarios that were once regarded as imaginary or the stuff of fiction are becoming realities.

It is against this backdrop that the National Defense College of the Philippines launched the Future of Philippine Warfare Project in 2020, in partnership with the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). It is the belief of the AFP and the NDCP that the Philippines can and should be ready for the coming wars of the next decade. The volume one of this Project, published in February 2021, sketched out the probable "future of war" scenarios, with several features of these visions already playing out in the ongoing 2022 Russo-Ukrainian War. Having envisioned the future of war and the types of conflicts the Philippines will likely confront in 10-20 years; it follows that attention must be paid to developing the right strategies and appropriate capabilities to face such challenges.

Though progress has been made to advance Philippine strategic planning and thought, a significant gap was identified in the theoretical foundations of Philippine strategic and defense planning. While the Philippine defense and security academic community has reams of data and has produced papers that discuss theories and methods for addressing the "root causes" of insurgency and terrorism, there remains a dearth of literature focusing on territorial and external defense, despite its increasing importance amidst the heightening risk of confrontation in the West Philippine Sea, and threats to Philippine sovereignty elsewhere, such as in the Philippine Rise.

An examination of official documents and public pronouncements indicate that the primary concept for external defense is predicated on "minimum credible defense", guided by the National Defense Strategy (NDS), National Military Strategy (NMS) 2019 and the Joint Operating Concept (JOC), and major service supporting strategies such as the Active Archipelagic Defense Strategy (AADS), Integrated Air Defense Strategy (IADS), and the Land Power Maneuver Concept (LPMC).

While these documents outline how the AFP would execute a defensive campaign and employ its air, land and sea forces to defend the country, several questions still remain: why would the AFP's force employment as outlined in the abovementioned documents, lead to a defeat of a prospective aggressor? What are the underlying strategic and operational logics and assumptions that inform these strategies and how they would lead to the desired end-goal? What does it mean for the Philippines to be victorious against an external aggressor?

There has been a certain reticence to use the term "victory" by Philippine defense and security practitioners, especially in addressing external security challenges. Perhaps it is due to a belief that conflicts are multifaceted, complex, and intractable, and that it may be hubristic to even speak of victory, for fear of alienating defeated yet prideful parties, or aggressor states with whom we must continue to engage. Perhaps too, we have collectively been resigned to thinking that "war is unwinnable", as stated by many prominent political personalities even up to the Presidents of the Philippines themselves.

As conflicts like the Russo-Ukrainian War are showing, continued ignorance and downplaying of external threats, even for ostensibly pragmatic reasons, can only bring existential peril. The critical assumptions that underpin preexisting defense policy, especially with regards to external defense, need to be reexamined. A conceptual construct is required for the AFP to begin answering these questions, especially as it confronts major challenges to sovereignty and territorial integrity. Put another way, there is a need for a Philippine theory of victory.

But what is a theory of victory? The late Colin Gray identified it as a set of plausible explanation of the "ability of success or failure in war to enable a decision in an issue". It is a collection of coherent ideas of how to shape a war, utilizing available or soon-to-be-available resources, forces and strategies, given the likely adversary and strategic context, to achieve the desired aims or end-state.

Achieving 'end-states' seems almost intuitive; the end-state and means to achieve it through the assorted national lines of effort, is articulated in the general policies and strategies of the Philippines, namely the National Security Policy (NSP), National Security Strategy (NSS), as well as other core security documents. But it should be noted that the end-states articulated in these documents are purposely broad and encompassing, due to the nature and intended audience of such documents. The Department of Defense (DND) and the AFP need to articulate these end-states according to their mandate and specialization.

While we may be familiar with the stakes of defense (our national patrimony, our sovereignty, our form of government as a democratic state,

our territorial integrity, the freedom and security of our people), as well as the general tools and strategies required (specific weapons systems, organizations, doctrines, approaches such as “whole of government” and “whole of nation”, defense diplomacy, etc.), we have not sufficiently assessed whether these tools and strategies would actually lead to achievement/protection of said stakes. Failure to do so has often led us to doing things for the sake of doing them – “for compliance”, not because they contribute to victory or security. It has also made advocacies for defense modernization difficult to defend despite sincere belief that defense modernization is overdue.

A theory of victory is supposed to explain why the strategies of the NSS, NDS and NMS will lead us to the desired end-state. Properly articulated and developed, such a construct could better ground Philippine defense planning, procurement wish-lists, and provide a coherent rationale of our defense posture.

This is important, as a comprehensive discourse on the country’s defense needs has been stymied by long-standing and entrenched biases in favor of internal security within the Philippine defense and security establishment, frequent characterization of the Philippines as a “small country” incapable of meaningful deterrence or even winning any war other than internal ones, and a lack of expertise or interest in the Philippine academic setting on key strategic concepts such as deterrence.

As the topic of the theory of victory is a new one for the Philippines, our partners in the AFP were provided guide questions to ponder while writing for this project. These questions were as follows:

- What is the Philippines’ “theory of victory” or desired end-state? What are our theories of victory against specific adversaries?
- What defense/warfighting strategy concepts would best answer the Philippine theories of victory in the short-term (from now to 2022), mid-term (by 2028), and long term (beyond 2028)?
- What capabilities must be attained to meet Philippine desired end-states and support its theories of victory? Which capabilities are the main purview of the AFP and what capabilities can be handed off to other security agencies or stakeholders?
- What needs to be done to meet or improve current capability roadmaps (e.g. AFP Modernization Program Horizon 2 and Horizon 3)?

The Philippine Army, through the Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Plans, G5, in its paper on The Philippine Army Theory of Victory, examines the theoretical and philosophical foundations for a theory of victory, as well as

the strategic environment and likely threats that its formulation of a theory of victory must meet. The Philippine Army assesses that the world that will continue to tread toward varying degrees of ‘hybrid warfare’, wherein adversaries will “resort to techniques and procedures both conventional and non-conventional within the same battlespace, tailored to exploit enemy weakness.” In this environment, the Philippine Army draws on a variety of strategic traditions from both East and West, acknowledging the need for “the most holistic view of strategy available.” It proposes a theory of victory to explain how the skillful employment of land power maneuver, in concert with the joint force and capacitated to wage cognitive, asymmetric and maneuver warfare, can lead to “an end-state where threats are deterred from starting or continuing a conflict”. Their paper also outlines three scenarios of concern where the Philippine Army’s theories may be tested - ranging from internal armed conflict to regional conflict.

The Philippine Navy, through the Office of the Assistant Chief of Naval Staff for Plans, N5, in its paper on Theorizing Naval Warfare: Conditions and Principles for Philippine Naval Victory, focuses on the naval dimensions of war and its vital role in securing Philippine defense interests. The Navy foresees a future where potential aggressors could conduct “deliberate, debilitating and decisive” war against the Philippines. To avert such scenario and to contribute to our victory, the Philippine Navy must shift from being an “input” to seapower, that reacts to the strategic environment and thus is at the mercy of aggressive powers, towards being an “output” to seapower, capable of exercising sea control and actively influencing the calculations of aggressors and allies alike, even if the power balance remains asymmetric between the Philippines and its adversary. In the context of an overarching threat to the Philippines from the West Philippine Sea, the Navy underscores the need to develop asymmetric capabilities in both cyberspace, surface, and subsurface areas, and leverage its partnerships and alliances.

The Philippine Air Force (PAF), through the Office of the Assistant Chief of Air Staff for Plans, A5, underlines the importance of “jointness” in its paper on the Philippine Air Force Theory of Victory. With the dynamic and evolving security environment, the PAF emphasizes adaptability, while remaining grounded and compatible with the Joint Force and the JOC. The PAF does not see itself as being in a vacuum, instead it needs to seamlessly operate with the other major services and government agencies, to achieve its objectives. Victory is therefore best achieved when the PAF is fully capacitated to meet these joint needs. To this end, the PAF has developed its Adaptive Combat Employment concept, which supports wider Integrated Air Operations.

Several commonalities can be observed between the papers. The major services and the AFP as a whole anchor their strategies and plans on key national defense documents, such as the NMS and JOC. The major services

see themselves as force providers, i.e., they provide forces that the AFP, through the General Headquarters and the Unified Commands, employ in an event of war. For the Army and Navy, their contributions to Philippine victory can be seen in establishing and maintaining deterrence in their respective domains. Meanwhile, the Air Force places emphasis on adaptability to effectively address future threats in support to the Joint Force.

In their discussions of future scenarios, the papers crucially appraised the likely adversary—taking note of their strategic culture, growing power, penchant for hybrid warfare and gray zone operations, as well their likely aims and objectives against the Philippines. Such endeavor is significant in crafting a theory of victory; a useful theory should be designed for a particular adversary, taking into consideration states' differing capabilities, mindsets, and worldviews.

Furthermore, the papers also considered the country's allies, and the likelihood for them to come into our aid in an event of an aggression. The Philippine Navy's paper goes into detail on the probability of military assistance and support from the United States and other like-minded countries. This is an important aspect for Philippine theory of victory due to the country's current defense capabilities. International and allied support is salient to successfully defend against aggression. Again, the Russo-Ukrainian War provides a stark real-life demonstration of the importance of international aid, as well as the limits of expecting external powers to come to one's defense.

The major services, and indeed the entire AFP, remained cognizant that they will be called upon to perform tasks other than war. This is a necessary part of their duties due to the country's many concerns as well as the reality that the AFP has certain capabilities not present in other departments of government. While this remains among their responsibilities during peacetime, there is a need to ensure that these tasks do not distract from their main objectives and goals. The 'theory of victory' concept is not meant to answer these other concerns; indeed, for non-traditional security and non-warfighting missions, alternative constructs for measuring success are required.

This volume of the Future of Philippine Warfare is not intended to decisively answer the question of what the Philippines' theories of victory must be against the threats we face. After all, as the Philippine Army itself mentions in its paper, ultimately these theories are just theories, and their validity can only truly be tested in the fires of war. While we surely hope it never comes to that, it is precisely in the spirit of the Future of Philippine Warfare project that we must continue to discuss and refine our theories, strategies and plans.

There is also a need to bring together the disparate views of the major services into a more holistic level, given the importance of 'jointness'. This is a way forward that the AFP via its planning and strategic studies units, led by the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans J5, can undertake to further improve Philippine military and strategic planning.

As a new administration takes office this 2022, the time is ripe for us to engage in these discussions. By questioning and refining our assumptions and developing more robust theories of victory to inform our strategies and our capability plans, we may better present the case to the new president, elected officials, and the Filipino people, that your Armed Forces is actively thinking, and making itself ready to meet the threats of the future.

**President's Papers:
The Future of Philippine Warfare Vol II**

PHILIPPINE ARMY THEORY OF VICTORY

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Abstract. As the Philippines progresses further into the 21st century, the unpredictability of security conditions creates multiple possibilities in terms of future threat scenarios. This ambiguity emphasizes the need for the country's defense institutions to adapt and evolve through the development of defense capabilities, and as necessary, a redefinition of security policies, doctrines, and strategies. In exploring the future of Philippine ground warfare, current threats encountered by the Philippine Army are examined vis-à-vis the trend of hybridization, due to globalization, mass communication, and rapid technological innovation. To contribute to the discourse on the Philippines' theory of victory, this paper argues that the concerted efforts of Army units, utilizing Landpower Maneuver, to supplement the actions of the Joint Force, will lead to enemy forces abandoning the idea of conflict in its entire spectrum due to loss of capability or will. The objective is to achieve an end-state where threats are deterred to start or continue conflict, by exploiting opportunities in all domains and dimensions of the security architecture. To further demonstrate the Philippine Army's *theory of victory*, multiple future scenarios involving hybrid threats to the ground force are employed in this paper. Towards the end, an overview of how Philippine Army's ground defense strategy and capability development direction are highlighted to describe the Army's path to victory.

INTRODUCTION

The Philippine security environment is not immune to internal and external pressures sustained or exacerbated by advancements in technology, among other fields; globalization; calamities; and the pursuit of differing, often clashing interests by state and non-state actors. Even more, these pressures put the country's security mechanisms to test at the local, regional, and global level. As the nation progresses further into the 21st century, the unpredictability of security conditions creates multiple possibilities in terms of future threat scenarios. This ambiguity emphasizes the need for the country's defense institutions to continuously adapt and evolve through the development of defense capabilities, and as necessary, through the redefinition of security policies, doctrines, and strategies. The National Defense College of the Philippines¹, for instance, advocates a collective understanding of what constitutes warfare, one that reflects the current trends in the security environment as well as lessons learned from the past, to usher a more strategic future direction for the defense sector, cognizant of fiscal limitations, as well as realistic expectations.

While it is important to note that the Philippine Army pursues organizational and capability development goals parallel to the direction of higher headquarters, and anchored to national level security policies, the

¹ Dianne Faye C Despi, et al., "Short, Sharp, and Multidimensional: Future Wars and Considerations for Philippine Defense and Deterrence," *President's Papers Volume 1: The Future of Philippine Warfare* (Quezon City: National Defense College of the Philippines, 2021), 77-88.

fulfillment of its mandate demands from it a more nuanced understanding of trends in ground defense strategies and operations. Relatedly, in exploring the future of Philippine ground warfare, current threats encountered by the ground force are examined vis-à-vis the trend of hybridization. Conflicts across various operational environments are perceived to evolve towards hybridity largely due to globalization, mass communication, and rapid technological innovation – all of which impact upon the perceptions and relations of rational state and non-state actors possessing offensive military capability, uncertain of each other’s interests, and at the very least, seeking survival within the anarchic international system.² Hybrid warfare, which more closely relates to the Eastern concept of warfare advanced by China, is the type which involves the employment of various techniques and procedures both conventional and non-conventional, within the same battlespace and tailored to exploit enemy weaknesses.³ The Philippine Army will thus encounter future threats that are first, willing to violate the sovereignty and promote violence in a time of peace; second, have strategic goals; and finally, realize the primacy and combination of other-than-conventional military forms of warfare.

However, productive discourse on the future Philippine security architecture does not end at a picture of what Philippine land, naval, and air warfare will look like. Rather, must extend towards the realms of strategy, doctrine, organization, material capabilities, and policy if it aims to inspire progress in the country’s defense sector.⁴ In light of clearly articulating the Philippine Army’s desired end-state given that the future ground warfare will possess hybrid characteristics, this paper looks into the Philippine Army’s theory of victory against future hybrid threats and argues that the **concerted efforts of Army units, utilizing Landpower Maneuver, to supplement the actions of the Joint Force, will lead to enemy forces abandoning the idea of conflict in its entire spectrum due to loss of capability or will. The objective is to achieve an end-state where threats are deterred to start or continue conflict, by exploiting opportunities in all domains and dimensions of the security architecture.**

In fleshing out this argument, the paper is structured to begin with a definition of what a theory of victory is. Largely drawing from American military thought, a theory of victory is a product of inquiry into how a strategy brings an actor towards its desired end state. Upon laying this foundation, the paper then presents the perspectives of Western and Eastern strategic thinkers on their concepts of victory. Eastern philosophies from strategists particularly Sun Tzu and Kautilya are more relevant to the modern hybrid

2 Rommel R Cordova, Wellard Maquida, and John Manangan, “The Future of Philippine Land Warfare: The Philippine Army’s Perspective,” *President’s Papers Volume 1: The Future of Philippine Warfare* (Quezon City: National Defense College of the Philippines, 2021), 2-31.

3 *Ibid.*

4 Despi, et al., “Short, Sharp, and Multidimensional”, 77-88.

scenarios, as opposed to ideas proliferated by Western thinkers, Clausewitz and Liddell Hart. National level strategic policies are then examined to draw a common understanding of what the country desires in terms of security, and how the government as whole, and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in particular, envisions to achieve this end. Eastern strategic thought and the Philippines’ security policies are analyzed to arrive at the Philippine Army theory of victory. This theory is further translated across various threat scenarios that the Philippine Army will most likely encounter in the future. In each of these scenarios of greatest concern which exhibit elements or characteristics of hybrid warfare, the Philippine Army will be able to achieve its desired end state, if its efforts are aimed at diminishing the enemy’s idea of conflict by stripping them off of their capabilities and their will. Added analysis is provided in the following section through a discussion of the Philippine Army’s Operating Concept and how it relates to the theory of victory. Similarly, the following portion briefs the reader of the Philippine Army’s capability development objectives, and examines how these can bring the Army closer to victory, as defined. Towards the end, the paper provides a summary of its arguments and highlights areas of possible study that will broaden and deepen the discussion of the Philippines theory of victory.

A PHILIPPINE THEORY OF VICTORY

The idea of reconceptualizing military strategy as a “theory of victory” is rooted in the Western—and specifically, the American—self-assessment of their strategic approach and culture as something that has ossified into rigid structures with simplistic applications. Meiser argues that the US defense community has boxed itself within the boundaries of the ends-ways-means formula by interpreting it too literally. He further argues that solving strategic problems using a comprehensive or whole-of-government approach has fostered within US strategists an overemphasis on straightforward and ultimately uncreative uses of the “means” element—resources.⁵ This creates “a situation where strategy is reduced to a perfunctory exercise in allocating resources,” an approach that is “an excellent way to foster policy stability, but it is not a recipe for critical and creative thinking”.⁶ Meiser concluded that strategy had to be reimagined as a theory of success, “a solution to a problem, an explanation of how obstacles can be overcome”.⁷ Such an approach “encourages creative thinking while keeping the strategist rooted in the process of causal analysis”.⁸ This helps clarify how a specific plan is expected to cause the desired end state in a given scenario.

5 Jeffrey W. Meiser, “Are Our Strategic Models Flawed? Ends + Ways + Means = (Bad) Strategy,” *Parameters* 46, no.4 (Winter 2016-2017): 81-82.

6 *Ibid.*, 82.

7 Meiser, “Are Our Strategic Models Flawed?,” 90.

8 *Ibid.*, 86.

Hoffman refines this concept by specifying the need to understand strategy as a hypothesis to be tested. Establishing a testable “if/then” statement is thus central to strategic development.⁹ For him, strategists should be proposing logical plans for specific scenarios, and they should refrain from answering how each scenario should end. Instead, a strategy should explain how and why its proposed ends-ways-means chain of causal events would work. Crafting such a logical chain of causal factors requires degrees of creativity that cannot be reduced to simple formulas, and so strategy, for Hoffman, has always been “more art than science.”¹⁰ The if/then hypothesis around which a strategy revolves is what today’s Western thinkers call a “theory of success” or “theory of victory.”

Strategy should always provide answers for the fundamental question of “what should we do?” Strategists identify a problem—a foe to defeat, a threat to intimidate—and provide decision-makers several distinct experimental responses,¹¹ all with their own pros and cons. Differences between strategic options should never be reduced to the amount of resources applied to solve a problem but rather provide variations in the kinds of resources used, the ways in which they are applied, or even the ends to be achieved. Each strategy is thus a unique theory on how a problem can be solved, and for the purposes of this article, theories of victory shall be expressed as a testable hypothesis in the form of an “if/then” statement.

Such a perspective is useful for a smaller world power like the Philippines. The pivot back towards creative thinking—and thus, the *art* of strategy—is a direct result of the US loss of its geopolitical domination as a lone superpower. Its problems can no longer be solved by simplistic applications of massive funding or expensive solutions, a state which the rest of the world is intimately familiar with. This sort of creativity benefits states dealing with other actors of equal or greater power, a category the Philippines fits perfectly.

Crafting such creative theories is a process that can be made easier by reviewing a few basic strategic principles from well-known military thinkers. In the Western tradition, Clausewitz and Liddell Hart stand as pillars of strategic thinking and military philosophy. Carl Von Clausewitz is famous for his views on the psychological and physical aspect of war. His concept of war as a continuation of policy, and of military victory as winning a clash of wills, has been a foundation of Western strategic thinking

9 Frank G. Hoffman, “The Mission Element in Crafting National Strategy: A Theory of Success,” *Joint Force Quarterly* 97 (2nd Qtr 2020): 57.

10 *Ibid.*, 61-62.

11 Iain King, “Beyond Ends, Ways, and Means: We need a Better Strategic Framework to Win in an Era of Great Power Competition,” *Modern War Institute at West Point*, US Marine Academy, 03 September 2020, <https://mwi.usma.edu/beyond-ends-ways-and-means-we-need-a-better-strategic-framework-to-win-in-an-era-of-great-power-competition/>.

for centuries.¹² Similarly, Sir Basil Liddell Hart saw the application of the military as a means to fulfill the ends of policy, although by emphasis the military’s role is ensuring the prosperous continuance of national policy. Military victory for Hart was less about position or attrition and more about analysis or paralysis—the best maneuvers produced decisive outcomes with no casualties.¹³ The philosophies of both men lend themselves easily to the kinetic and maneuver warfare of the actual battlefield, despite involving political elements and statecraft in their writings. Central ideas under these contexts revolve around the enemy’s will to resist.

The foundational concepts of Eastern strategists can also be translated into such if/then statements. With the dual but complimentary aspects of harmony and chaos, as well as his emphasis on the use of both maneuver and deception at all levels of conflict, Sun Tzu’s *Art of War* continues to be relevant in today’s trend of whole-of-government approaches. Like Hart, he proposed the bloodless nature of an ideal and decisive victory.¹⁴ Similarly, the Indian scholar Kautilya took a whole-of-government approach to conflict, emphasized the use of spies for both diplomacy and warfare, and saw the preservation of the state and the economic well-being of its people as paramount to victory. He made no distinction between internal and external threats, writing as he was for a state that had to address all threats at once during a period of great existential crisis. Kautilya’s *Arthashastra* presents open warfare as a last resort due to the damage kinetic operations can cause the economies and societies of both parties involved, but even his peacetime use of diplomacy and spy craft can be more ruthless than his Western counterparts, such as Machiavelli.¹⁵

12 See George Dimitriu, *Clausewitz and the politics of war: A contemporary theory*, Taylor & Francis, 2018; and Adrien Schu, “What is war? A reinterpretation of Carl von Clausewitz’s “formula”,” *Revue française de science politique*, Vol. 67, Issue 2 (2017), 1-18, ISBN 9782724635102.

13 See Alex Danchev, “Liddell-Hart’s Big Idea”, *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 25, Issue 1 (January 1999): 29-48, <https://library.fes.de/libalt/journals/swetsfulltext/14965921.pdf>; Scott Morrison, “Redefining the Indirect Approach, Defining Special Operations Forces (SOF) Power, and the Global Networking of SOF”, *Journal of Strategic Security*, Volume 7, Number 2, Special Issue: The Global SOF Network (Summer 2014): 48-54; and B.H. Liddell-Hart, *Strategy: The Indirect Approach* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1954).

14 See Joshua J Mark, “Sun-Tzu”, *World History Encyclopedia*, 09 July 2020, <https://www.worldhistory.org/Sun-Tzu/>; Akshay Joshi, “Strategic Wisdom from the Orient: Evaluating the Contemporary relevance of Kautilya’s *Arthashastra* and Sun Tzu’s *Art of War*,” *Strategic Analysis*, Vol 43, No. 1 (2019): 54-74, DOI: 10.1080/09700161.2019.1571747; John F Sullivan, “Sun Tzu’s Fighting Words.” *The Strategy Bridge*, 15 June 2020, <https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2020/6/15/sun-tzus-fighting-words>; Li-Sheng Arthur Kuo, “Sun Tzu’s War Theory in the 21st Century” (Strategy Research Paper, US Army War College, 2007); Manuel Poejo Torres, “Sun Tzu: The Art of War”, *The Three Swords Magazine*, Vol 33, 2018, https://www.jwc.nato.int/images/stories/threeswords/SUNTZU_2018.pdf; and Edward O’Dowd and Arthur Walrdon, “Sun Tzu for Strategists,” *Comparative Strategy*, Vol 10, Issue 1 (1991): 25-36.

15 See Roger Boesche, “Moderate Machiavelli? Contrasting *The Prince* with the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya,” *Critical Horizons* Vol 3, No. 2 (2002): 253-276; and Joshi, “Strategic Wisdom from the Orient,” 54-74.

While overcoming the enemy's will to resist is also part of Eastern military traditions, there is also more emphasis on sustaining one's own strength during conflict. Central ideas of Sun Tzu and Kautilya can thus be expressed as hypotheticals with broader horizons, encompassing more than just the kinetic aspects of warfare. For example: if the enemy is properly deceived and outmaneuvered, then their ranks can be sown with chaos while your own side preserves its harmony, resulting in an effortless victory. Or, if all resources available to the state are used to keep it whole, its economy working, and its people safe and happy, then wealth will be created while justice and expansion are ensured despite the hostility of rival powers.

The concepts found in either tradition are not mutually exclusive. However, assuming that all future warfare will be waged in varying degrees of hybridity, the central ideas of the Eastern philosophies do seem to lend themselves better to modern conflict scenarios. Hybrid warfare is “the adversary's employment of various techniques and procedures, both conventional and unconventional, within the same battlespace, and tailored to exploit enemy weaknesses”.¹⁶ Such conflicts require the most holistic view of strategy available. At the level of grand strategy, the terms ‘victory’ and ‘success’ are viewed differently in the Eastern tradition. “Restraint in war, moderate and balanced attitudes towards the use of force, and attaining legitimacy through moral and just practices” are recurring themes in the classic works of both Kautilya and Sun Tzu.¹⁷ The two also have a unique understanding of the costs of war—the devastation of a prolonged conflict of attrition will see a hollow victory to whoever wins the contest.

These fundamental philosophical concepts are the base for the distinctive strategies of the Sinicized states of Asia.¹⁸ The Philippines is surrounded by such states—Vietnam, India, Taiwan, China, Korea, and Japan have all used Sun Tzu's or Kautilya's philosophies in past and current conflicts.¹⁹ The country thus needs national strategies that can keep it in step with its neighbors, and its theories of victory should be no exception.

A theory of victory at the PA level will have to anchor itself to broader national strategies. The Philippines' National Security Policy (NSP) 2017–2022 identifies national security interests and describes both external

16 Accordingly, victory in such conflicts is determined “when there is a proper understanding of the strategic goal as well as the successful imposition of the aggressors will,” which manifests itself in “the full and absolute political power on a territory or specific technology, operation, influence, or Denial Area action.” Cordova, Maquida and Manangan, “The Future of Philippine Land Warfare”, 9-10.

17 Ibid.

18 O'Dowd and Waldron, “Sun Tzu for Strategists,” 33-34.

19 Ibid., 28-33.

and internal challenges to them. It provides goals and strategic objectives for the government and private sector towards security of the Filipino nation. Anchored on the NSP, the National Military Strategy (NMS) 2019 guides the AFP in the attainment of national military objectives (NMOs) amid a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) strategic environment. The document tackles how to address threats, both kinetic and non-kinetic, in the political, economic, socio-cultural, techno-scientific, environmental, and military (PESTEM) dimensions through the Influence-Deter-Defend (IDD) approach. The IDD concept is easily related to Eastern strategic traditions: kinetic warfare is a last resort and the corresponding Joint Operating Concept of the AFP emphasizes a holistic and collaborative approach to security concerns whether in peacetime or in war.

At the PA level, it therefore follows that defeating national security threats would require concerted actions of Army units, utilizing Landpower Maneuver, to supplement the actions of the Joint Force, so that threats will abandon the idea of conflict in its entire spectrum due to loss of capability or will. The objective is to achieve an end state where threats are deterred to start or continue conflict, by exploiting opportunities in all domains and dimensions of the security architecture.

This shall be the Army's theory of victory.

THE PA'S FUTURE STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

The future of Philippine land warfare is hybrid, where threat actors will resort to techniques and procedures both conventional and non-conventional within the same battlespace, tailored to exploit enemy weakness.²⁰ As of current, the Philippine Army faces three kinds of threats, as shown in Figure 1: technologically-advanced conventional threats, internal destabilizing threats, and non-state asymmetric threats.²¹ Their intent to pursue their strategic interests regardless of violations of state sovereignty coupled with their capabilities to employ other-than-conventional military forms of warfare will most likely increase their hybridity. In the future, the Philippine Army will encounter three (3) scenarios of greatest concern involving these threats. Using a modified Cone of Plausibility framework²², which takes into account the current strategic and operating environment, its drivers and trends, and threat groups and security challenges, a strategic assessment report points to the invasion of Taiwan, the resurgence of Communist-Terrorist Groups (CTGs), and occasional violent attacks of

20 Cordova, Maquida and Manangan, “The Future of Philippine Land Warfare”, 2-31.

21 Philippine Army, *Landpower Maneuver Concept: Securing the Sovereignty, Defending the Land Territory* (Taguig City: Philippine Army, 2015), 8.

22 Philippine Army, *Philippine Army Strategic Assessment Report 2023-2028* (Taguig City: Philippine Army, 2021), 7.

terrorist groups, as the most urgent and the most concerning scenarios the Army will face in the future. To demonstrate the relevance of the Philippine Army's theory of victory, each of these scenarios shall be discussed in brief.

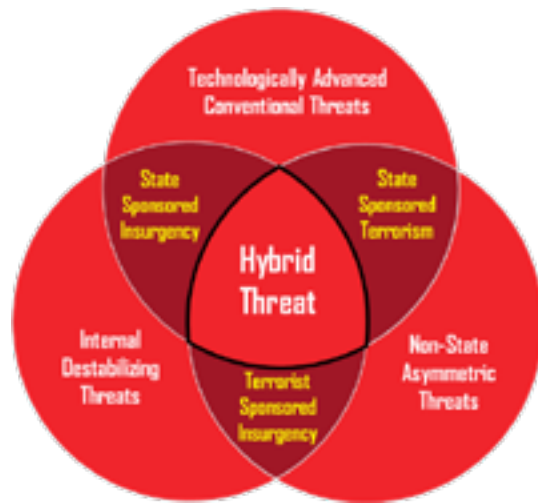


Figure 1. The relation and character of threats

A Military Invasion of Taiwan

In regard to the scenario of a Taiwan invasion by China and its implications to the future security environment, several things are of note. Reunification is a crucial component of the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) "China Dream," and is considered a sacred obligation. Having set long-term goals for 2035²³ may also hint on internal pressures faced by China and its possible willingness to employ military force to occupy Taiwan. Taipei had recently embarked on military build-up through an arms trade with Washington, enabling it to respond to an asymmetric attack from Beijing; however, a number of aerial and naval grey zone activities have been constantly carried out by the People's Liberation Army (PLA) in its territory. Such activities increase the possibility of accidents which can lead to escalation, and further uncertainties.²⁴

²³ "(Authorized) Communiqué of the Fifth Plenary Session of the 19th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China," Xinhua.net, last modified October 29, 2020, http://www.xinhuanet.com/2020-10/29/c_1126674147.htm.

²⁴ The International Institute for Strategic Studies, "Asia," in *Strategic Survey 2021: The Annual Assessment of Geopolitics* (Oxon: Routledge, 2021), 141-151.

A Chinese military invasion of Taiwan will change the region's balance of power as it will enable China to "project power beyond the First Island Chain and control the seas up to the Second Island Chain."²⁵ This situation will place the Philippines and its Armed Forces, particularly the Philippine Army at a position to defend against a superpower with expertise in conducting hybrid warfare especially through gray zone operations.

If the PA sustains military cooperation with strategic partners and allies, and is able to build capabilities, then it can defend against an external aggression.

A Resurgence of Communist-Terrorist Groups

One of the main goals of the Duterte administration is to eradicate Communist-Terrorist Groups (CTG). To this end, the government has operationalized the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC) under a whole-of-nation approach which synchronizes all the government's instrumentalities of power with the capabilities of private sector stakeholders.²⁶ However, one of the strengths of CTGs is their ability to exploit the country's political institutions and align their interests with political leaders. In the future, CTGs may gain new strength in terms of influence and resources, thereby enabling them to rebuild their dwindling forces. Moreover, CTGs may capitalize on the country's economic slump to gain mass support from the frustrated populace, especially the youth sector, through social media propaganda.²⁷

Seeing that a resurgence of the CTGs is tied to their ability to exploit non-military capabilities, to include shaping and influencing public perceptions and doing so in non-physical domains like cyberspace, if the Philippine Army and its partners work in unison towards winning the 'hearts and minds' of the people through information warfare, then internal destabilizing threat elements will be reduced to their smallest force and their armed wing crippled. Information warfare may be combined with kinetic operations, to win popular support for the government in previously CTG-controlled areas, and dissuade the populace from resorting to or supporting an armed struggle against the state. Without the support of the masses and in the absence of strong political backing, CTGs may be stripped off an element that fuels them to pursue their agenda.

²⁵ The International Institute for Strategic Studies, "Asia," in *Strategic Survey 2021: The Annual Assessment of Geopolitics* (Oxon: Routledge, 2021), 149.

²⁶ "The whole-of-nation approach in attaining inclusive and sustainable peace," National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict, accessed December 08, 2021, <https://www.ntfelcac.org/>

²⁷ Philippine Army, *Philippine Army Strategic Assessment Report 2023-2028* (Taguig City: Philippine Army, 2021), 7.

Occasional Violent Attacks to Spoil the Peace Process in Southern Philippines

The final future scenario of greatest concern for the Philippine Army is the possible launching of occasional violent attacks by terrorist groups to spoil the peace process in the South. The Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) is currently administered by the Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA), which will stay in legislative power until 2025. The creation of the BARMM and its BTA were established through the signing of the Bangsamoro Organic Law. These developments are continuations of the long peace process pursued by the Philippine government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) under the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro signed in 2014. Given that uncertainties still hover around the establishment of the BARMM's parliamentary government, and complex structures exist among a number of ethno-linguistic groups, clans and guerilla units²⁸ in the region, militant groups inclined towards terrorism are likely to disrupt the ongoing peace process through occasional violent attacks. Further, they may tap into various social media platforms to spread ideologies pertaining to violent extremism.

In this scenario, if the Philippine Army properly leverages its alliances and partnerships, and operationalizes its Brigade Combat Teams, then the Army can contribute to mitigating the spread of terrorist narratives and mitigate the effects of violent attacks. The Philippine Army must be able to properly blend non-kinetic and kinetic approaches to prevent terrorist groups not just from launching violent attacks, but more some from spreading their ideologies and gaining ground in the cognitive domain.

In all these future hybrid threat scenarios, the Philippine Army must develop, organize, train, equip, sustain and support units capable of engaging in cross domain operations as part of the Joint Force, geared towards deterrence by targeting not only the enemy's capabilities but more so, its will to fight.

THE PA'S STRATEGY CONCEPT

To guide Army planners in developing the future ground force, one that is capable of addressing various military scenarios,²⁹ the Philippine Army Operating Concept (PAOC) 2021 prescribes in broad terms the application of ground force capabilities to achieve military objectives. Simply, the Army's strategy is reflected in the Philippine Army Operating Concept 2021 (PAOC). Although the document is an Operating Concept, it describes

28 Georgi Engelbrecht, "The Philippines: Three More Years for the Bangsamoro Transition", International Crisis Group, last updated October 29, 2021, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/asia/south-east-asia/philippines/philippines-three-more-years-bangsamoro-transition>.

29 Philippine Army, Philippine Army Operating Concept (2021)

in broad strokes the ends, ways, and means of the Army in contributing to the country's defense. It is anchored to the strategic guidance of the National Military Strategy 2019, and the AFP Joint Operating Concept 2020, and therefore follows the Influence-Deter-Defend notion on defense.

In a sense, the Influence-Deter-Defend (IDD) notion of country defense trails more from the teachings of Sun Tzu and Kautilya than that of Clausewitz. It encourages a holistic view of military strategy by focusing not only on the traditional aspects of warfare, which is the full-on confrontation between two opposing forces, but also the non-traditional ones to, preserve harmony and avert the occurrence of bloodshed. Here, Defense is resorted to only as a last resort. It requires much effort on shaping the strategic and operational environment, as well as the understanding of threats on government actions to induce on them the abandonment of the idea of conflict. Like Sun Tzu's theory of victory, the IDD focuses on battle prevention and secondarily on the actual confrontation of the adversary. When conflict is not avoided, the AFP is to exercise strategic flexibility and asymmetric approaches to avoid enemy strengths and strike at its vulnerable points.³⁰ This approach is in line with Sun Tzu's thought when he said "avoid what is strong and strike what is weak."

To support the IDD, the Army follows the concept of Landpower Maneuver as the core of its strategy. Landpower Maneuver is the Army's strategy concept which highlights the use of ground forces for Multi-Domain Operations to generate direct and indirect lethal and non-lethal effects that would create strategic and operational advantages for the force in the attainment of National Military Objectives. This is applied to influence people, militaries, and governments and to gain and maintain control over land areas by exploiting the opportunities presented by the other domains.³¹ This is especially important in the conflict objectives of Maritime and Airspace defense, Territorial Defense, and Internal Security Stabilization since it expounds the area where the Army operates on, from purely land operations to multi-domain operations.

The strategy concept of Landpower Maneuver links ideal Army actions to achieve desired outcomes. Basically, it calls for Army efforts, coupled with contributions to the joint force, to induce to national security threats the notion of abandoning the idea of conflict, either before it begins or when it is already occurring, depending on the threat or circumstance. The Landpower Maneuver, being the Army's strategy concept describes the ends, ways, and means to achieve this desired end state.

30 Armed Forces of the Philippines, AFP Joint Operating Concept (2020)

31 Philippine Army, Philippine Army Operating Concept (2021)

Going back to the concept of theory of victory, it is paramount to explain how and why this strategy concept would work against state adversaries in particular conflict scenarios. Since a theory of victory is a product of inquiry into how a strategy brings an actor towards its desired end state, it would follow that this document should encompass a theory of how to do so. Following history's strategic thinkers, a theory of victory should explain how a strategy, in this case, the Landpower Maneuver, would bring Army adversaries to a culminating point to not run the cost and risk of conflict, but instead accede to the preferences of the primary actor, in our instance, the Philippine Army.

The impetus for change on how the Army conducts warfare was based largely on technological development and how threats are fighting. To elaborate, when state adversaries introduce a non-traditional capability to pursue motives and advance intentions, the Army quickly adopts an appropriate form of maneuver through Landpower Maneuver. Much like how Internal Destabilizing Threats have familiarized themselves in the conduct of cognitive warfare to exert influence over the cognitive domain, or when Technologically Advanced Conventional Threats are weaponizing the outer space to outmatch their adversaries, the Army likewise grows its arsenal to be capable of confronting threats and exploiting their vulnerabilities. Landpower Maneuver enables the Army to execute the same, and more, since it presents the Army multiple avenues of approach in responding to the contingencies created by the threats. Further, the country's threat landscape employs complex and hybrid forms of warfare. They do not limit themselves from the physical dimensions of conflict, but extends their capabilities to the non-physical realms of cognitive, cyber, and outer space. Some also touch on the political, economic, and socio-cultural dimensions to create military effects short of war.³² Landpower Maneuver is what the Army needs in this threat landscape since it permits strategic flexibility and multi-domain maneuvers.

Landpower Maneuver has four operational approaches: 1) Cognitive Warfare; 2) Collaboration and Partnership; 3) Asymmetric Warfare; and 4) Maneuver Warfare.³³

Cognitive Warfare encourages maneuvers in the cognitive domain to establish a predetermined perception among target audiences to gain advantage over another party, as depicted in Figure 2.³⁴ The objective is to use information to directly or indirectly influence a target audience into action or inaction, so that it acts within the best interest of the Army. This approach

32 Philippine Army, Philippine Army Operating Concept (2021)

33 Ibid.

34 Paul Ottewell, "Defining the Cognitive Domain", *Over The Horizon Journal*, 07 December 2020, <https://othjournal.com/2020/12/07/defining-the-cognitive-domain/>

deals with the requirement of "moral influence" over threats and allies for victory in war. It is believed that to achieve victory, the Army must diminish the moral support structure of its enemies to shake its will and weaken its capabilities. Truly, the "Acme of skill is to subdue the enemy without fighting." Cognitive Warfare is instrumental to accomplish this dictum since disruption and disintegration of a threat's morale through acts directed against the mental processes of its members leads to the degradation of the enemy's will to fight.³⁵ Elements of cognitive warfare are to be pursued as adjuncts of military operations to allow the successful delivery of kinetic effects in the operational environment.³⁶

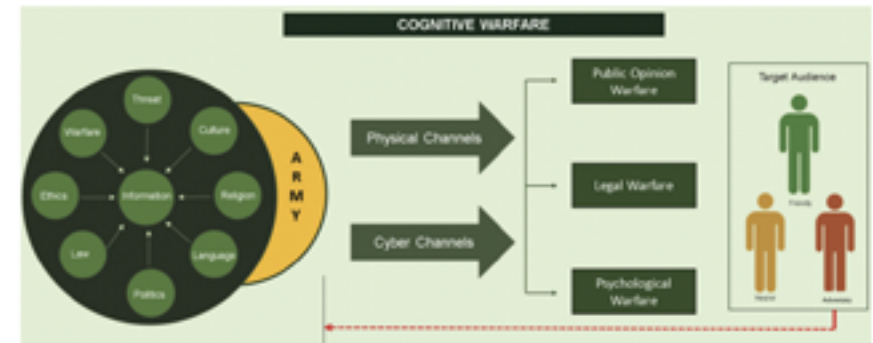


Figure 2. Cognitive Warfare

The second operational approach is Collaboration and Partnership. This allows the Army to leverage on alliances and partnerships to set operational conditions that favor the achievement of military objectives, even across areas where the military as prescribed by law, cannot operate. This approach multiplies the Army's capabilities, legitimacy, and influence since partners bring tailored capabilities, forces, and access to areas or domains that complement military assets. Likewise, the Army benefits from the deterrent and defense value that allies provide.³⁷ For instance, the Army's primary mandate is warfighting. Thus, its support structure is relatively limited only to those associated with defense. Alliances and partnerships would allow the Army to exert its influence over other dimensions of national security, such as the political, economic, and socio-cultural realms

35 Abjith Singh, "China's Three Warfares and India", *Journal of Defense Studies*, Vol 7, No 4 (October-December 2013): 27-46, ISSN 0976-1004.

36 Emily Bienvenue, Zac Rogers and Sian Troath, "Innovation and Adaptation: Cognitive Warfare." *The Cove*, 20 September 2018, <https://cove.army.gov.au/article/cognitive-warfare>.

37 Rachel Ellehuus, and Colin Wall, "Leveraging Allies and Partners," *CSIS Briefs*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 28 January 2021, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/leveraging-allies-and-partners>

to support military operations. This is especially vital since hybrid threats employ have greater influence, wider networks, and more personnel. Hybrid Threats allocate military resources strategically and resort primarily to non-military means, though military and aggressive confrontations are still possible.³⁸

Asymmetric and Maneuver Warfare are complementary. It is apparent that the Army cannot afford a full-on confrontation against another State adversary that has more advanced capabilities, more personnel, and more resources to sustain the fight. But with Asymmetric and Maneuver Warfare, the Army will be capable of circumventing the strengths of its adversaries. Shown in Figure 3, the Army shall capitalize on the ingenuity of its soldiers to produce and develop innovative tactics, weapons and technologies in all levels of warfare, may it be strategic, operational or tactical, across the full spectrum of conflict. The benefit of the two stresses not only avoidance of strengths, but also the exploitation of initiatives. The skillful combination of the two puts in mind Chang Mengxiong's concept of "Assassin's Mace". He used the analogy of acupuncture for fighting against asymmetrically more powerful adversaries and argued that, even superpowers have a great number of vulnerable points. The focus of attacks must be in those points, then the military giant can be brought down by the weak.³⁹ This is especially relevant since the country is a small state. As a small state, leveraging on asymmetries and strategic and operational maneuvers are vital to defeat enemies. Learning from Sun Tzu, the Philippine Army's employment of concepts of operations, which are significantly different from that of their targets would enable it to attack enemy vulnerabilities and capitalize on ground force strengths. Coupled with surprise, simultaneous and continuous attacks in multiple avenues, this will disrupt the will or commitment of the enemy, consequently deterring the same to start or continue the fight.

In the three scenarios discussed in the previous chapter, the effective execution of Landpower Maneuver is wanting to avert their possible occurrence. The perceived invasion of Taiwan would result to an external defense contingency since it will involve not only China and Taiwan, but also all their neighboring countries, and US itself, being a strategic partner of Taiwan. Being in a strategic location for China, the Philippines may be a target for China's Anti-access/Area denial strategy against US. In such instance, the Philippine Army may find itself confronting a super power to defend the nation's soil. In responding to this contingency, all of the operational approaches of the Landpower Maneuver are vital. Cognitive Warfare

38 *President's Papers: The Future of Philippine Warfare Volume 1* (Quezon City: National Defense College of the Philippines 2021)

39 Ehsan Ahrari, "China's Preoccupation with Asymmetric War: Lessons Learned from the Hezbollah-Israeli War", *Small Wars Journal*, 15 October 2009, <https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrn/art/chinas-preoccupation-with-asymmetric-war>

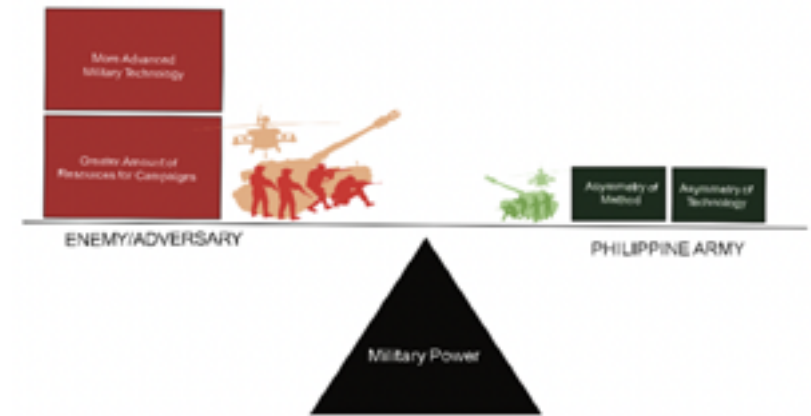


Figure 3. Asymmetric and Maneuver Warfare

would create a unified stand of local and international partners against the perceived invading force. It will also be instrumental in delivering consistent and unified messages against the same so that the Army can leverage on its partners and allies. Leveraging alliances will be effective for deterrence and defense. Hopefully, the invading force will think twice before attacking when the country has a strong military cooperation with other foreign militaries. Asymmetric Warfare and Maneuver Warfare are the most important here since the Philippine Army is a relatively small force. Thus, it cannot afford a head-on engagement against the invading force. The Army shall exploit the advantages given by the terrain, systems, and allies to target weaknesses of the invading force, their military leadership, logistics, and tactics.

The second scenario is the possible resurgence of CTGs. It has been five decades of confrontation against these supposed freedom fighters, and their secret lay on their popular support. CTGs center of gravity is not their leadership but the people.⁴⁰ They are primarily concerned with the struggle of influence. Ideologies are integral elements of this conflict to win the "hearts and minds" of the people. It is a contest of support from the population and secondarily, of guns and bullets. Information is indeed, a more powerful weapon against internal destabilizing threats (IDTs). Thus, the focus of efforts would be on actions that affect human factors, supported by kinetic and conventional systems of war and conflict. The operational approaches allow the Army to execute the enemy-centric and community-centric approach of addressing insurgency.⁴¹ These approaches will aid in

40 James A Gavrilis, "A Model for Population-Centered Warfare: A Conceptual Framework for Analyzing and Understanding the Theory and Practice of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency", *Small Wars Journal*, 05 October 2009, <https://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/journal/docs-temp/241-gavrilis.pdf>.

41 Philippine Army, "Army Operations," *Philippine Army Manual*

creating a secure physical and psychological environment in affected areas by clearing IDT elements within, and then establishing firm government control over the same. They also allow the improvement of popular support to the government and dissuading them into resorting and supporting the armed struggle since they also consider offense, defense, and stability mechanisms.

Occasional violent attacks to spoil the peace process in the South is the third scenario. Breakaway groups of the MILF/MNLF who turn to terrorism ensure that peace overtures between the government and their former group do not succeed. Spoilage succeeds when any of the parties fail to sign or implement a settlement. Here, the operational approaches of cognitive warfare, leveraging alliances and partnership, and maneuver warfare is vital. Cognitive Warfare and Leveraging Alliances and Partnership allows the Army to tap the credible voices of civic society groups to stop, challenge and counter the narratives of these breakaway groups in spoiling the peace process. For Maneuver Warfare, the Brigade Combat Teams, are essential to dominate the battlefield and gain full control of the contingency. It shall conduct cross-domain maneuvers, with the joint force, supported by intelligence, following the concept of Mission Command.

The Army's posturing for Landpower Maneuver enables its strategic application of military and non-military forces to address the contingencies made from threat activities. Given their rapidly evolving nature and character, the Army will adapt, notwithstanding the complexities of the strategic and operational environment. It is in this notion of Landpower Maneuver is conceptualized, and the same guides the current capability development of the force. It is not enough that the Army develops capabilities. It is important that these capabilities are tailored fit to suit the needs of time and be able to out maneuver adversaries. Remember that the Army exists only for land defense, and it cannot perform this without capabilities, specifically developed to defeat state adversaries.

CAPACITATING THE PA TOWARDS VICTORY

The PAOC requires the PA to develop capabilities which offer the most operational flexibility against hybrid threats in both internal security and external defense operations. Such capabilities must also provide cross-domain synergy with other AFP branches in joint operations. The PA's capability development efforts thus involve more than just the modernization of its materiel and the professionalization of its personnel. It also requires the pursuit of the most cost-effective means of upgrading Army forces, aligned with its operational concepts and approaches.

Proper capability development provides forces with the abilities to perform mission tasks that are essential in achieving both operational

and strategic objectives. In military terms, a force's capability is a measure of preparedness in personnel, equipment, training readiness, and sustainment.⁴²

The advantage of using capability development as a fulcrum for long-term strategic planning is its flexibility, achieved by emphasizing the links between strategy, mission-essential tasks, and other high-level requirements without having to specify the resources involved. By focusing on what the Army wants its forces to do, development efforts avoid being reactive to the types of threats encountered—an approach that often results in a myopic preoccupation over specific technologies to counter specific threats. Focusing on the ways to achieve desired end-states instead creates a proactive approach to defense.⁴³ It encourages innovation by abstracting away from early determination of equipment solutions and thereby removing single-service stovepipe constraints.⁴⁴

Capability Development

The PA's current capability development can be traced back to RA 7898, signed on 23 February 1995. The "AFP Modernization Act" aimed to upgrade the armed forces "to a level where it can effectively and fully perform its constitutional mandate" over a fifteen-year period.⁴⁵ This was followed in 2012 by RA 10349, which amended several sections of the prior Act, most of which involving government appropriations.⁴⁶ Currently, the PA is following its Medium-Term Capability Development Plan (MTCDP) for 2022-2028 to ensure that these efforts continue afoot. The document serves as a blueprint for the next stage of the Army's evolution into a more capable fighting force, describing how the PA's outlined capability, force, and sustainment goals shall be achieved over time.

The PA has identified twenty-five (25) different capability areas targeted for development in the next seven years. A majority of its plans aim to make Army forces mission-ready for external defense operations, since many of the PA's capability gaps and shortfalls are found in the areas of Maritime Defense and Cyber Security. Additionally, the development of materiel components remains the greatest effort in capability development,

42 The DND defines the term "capability" as the ability "to preplan and accomplish a mission and achieve the effects desired in an anticipated operational environment in a specified time and state of preparedness." *Circular 11 s2011*, Department of National Defense 2011.

43 Leung Chim, Rick Nunes-Vaz, and Robert Prandolini, "Capability-Based Planning for Australia's National Security." *Security Challenges* Vol 6, No3 (2010): 81

44 *Ibid.*, 84.

45 Republic Act No. 7898, c.1995, "An Act Providing for the Modernization of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and for Other Purposes", Republic of the Philippines

46 Republic Act No. 10349, c. 2012. "An Act Amending Republic Act No. 7898, Establishing the Revised AFP Modernization Program and for Other Purposes."

with many of the capability areas lacking facility and material mission-readiness. The importance which the AFP has attached to developing C4ISTAR and Missile Systems also influenced the PA's list of high priority projects. Improving such capabilities should thus prepare Army forces for its scenarios of greatest concern.

Seven (7) PA capability areas in the plan address the greatest number of hybrid threats, solve the most capability gaps, and fall under the AFP's priorities. These are 1) C4ISTAR, 2) Intelligence, 3) Cyber Security, 4) Electronic Warfare, 5) Air Defense, 6) Fires, and 7) Counter-Swarm, shown in Figure 4. High investment items from their materiel components constitute the PA's priority projects in the medium-term.



Figure 4. Seven PA capability areas that address hybrid threats

First are the capabilities that involve the development of C4ISTAR Systems. The Army's C4ISTAR capability integrates the gathering, consolidation, processing, and communication of intelligence information vital to tactical units. Information is also provided by the Intelligence capability provides, which is the PA's ability to use an integrated and systematic process of intelligence collection, processing, production, and dissemination.⁴⁷ Together, these two capabilities allow the Army to conduct operations with informed decision-making and adapt to all kinds of terrain.

⁴⁷ Armed Forces of the Philippines, *AFP Frag-O* (2019)

Strengthening these capabilities are the Cyber Security and Electronic Warfare capabilities, which increase the protection of the Army's C4ISTAR infrastructure. The Cyber Security Capability is the use of cyberspace to deliver an effect, which can be defensive in nature (such as protection and resilience) or offensive (such as influence, coercion, disruption, and destruction). Electronic Warfare (EW) is the military use of electronics, involving actions taken to both prevent or reduce an enemy's effective use of radiated electromagnetic emissions and ensure its own effective use of radiated electromagnetic energy.⁴⁸

Then there are the capability areas that involve different Missile Systems. Air Defense is the defensive measure for attacking enemy aircrafts or missiles in the air.⁴⁹ The Fires Capability is the ability to deliver precise, lethal, and accurate deep and mass fires against security threats. PA artillery can provide deep and mass fires to neutralize or suppress the enemy and assist in the integration of all fire support in combined arms operations.⁵⁰ Finally, the PA's Counter-swarm Capability is its ability to respond to and disrupt multiple unmanned platforms of enemy forces coming from different directions by utilizing both lethal and non-lethal systems.⁵¹

The C4ISTAR and Missile Systems the PA is developing will contribute greatly to its ability to perform Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2/AD) operations alongside similar capabilities of the other Major Services. A2/AD refers to the employment of methods and capabilities to prevent an entity from accessing an area and denying its use.⁵² The C4ISTAR systems also allow PA ground forces to contribute to the country's Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) by providing additional Command and Control infrastructure for joint operations.⁵³

Besides the mentioned capabilities, the PA will also continue sustaining its already highly developed Infantry and Special Operations capabilities. The PA's Infantry Capability is the ability of its ground operating forces to engage the enemy effectively and efficiently, achieving more tangible results by closing in thru fire and maneuver.⁵⁴ Sustaining it requires an upgrade of its organizational, materiel, and facility components for effective Military Operations in Urban Terrain (MOUT)—a hard-earned lesson from the experience of the Battle of Marawi. Meanwhile, the Philippine Army Special Operations Forces function as combat multipliers to enhance

⁴⁸ Philippine Army, PAM 6-0102-04, "Cyberspace Operations".

⁴⁹ Philippine Army, PAM 3-08, "Artillery Fires."

⁵⁰ Philippine Army, PAM 3-04, "Field Artillery Operations".

⁵¹ Philippine Army, PAM 3-0803-01 "Army Air and Missile Defense Operations".

⁵² Armed Forces of the Philippines, *AFP Joint Operating Concept* (2020), 26.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 35.

⁵⁴ Philippine Army, PAM 3-0501-03, "PA Infantry Battalion Operations".

the effects of conventional military power and achieve military, political, economic, or psychological objectives by non-conventional means in hostile, denied, or politically sensitive areas.⁵⁵

These backbones of Philippine ground forces will be the centerpieces of manpower maneuver for external defense operations. They wield many of the components of the C4ISTAR Systems being developed and will remain relevant against the remaining or newly emergent internal threats in the coming years.

International Defense and Security Engagements

To supplement these capability development efforts, the PA will also look to its allies and partners for assistance. The strategic intent of the Philippine Army International Military Affairs (IMA) and International Defense and Security Engagement (IDSE) is to leverage alliances, partnerships, and relationships, both bilateral and multilateral, to advance national security, attain the national military objectives, and to help develop selected Army capabilities. Through Army diplomacy, the PA shall strengthen its relationship among the armies of ASEAN member states, as well as the armies of the country's allies, and partners in the Indo-Pacific region, as shown in Figure 5. Moreover, it shall also closely collaborate with the United Nations and other multilateral entities in order to support peacekeeping and HADR operations in the region.

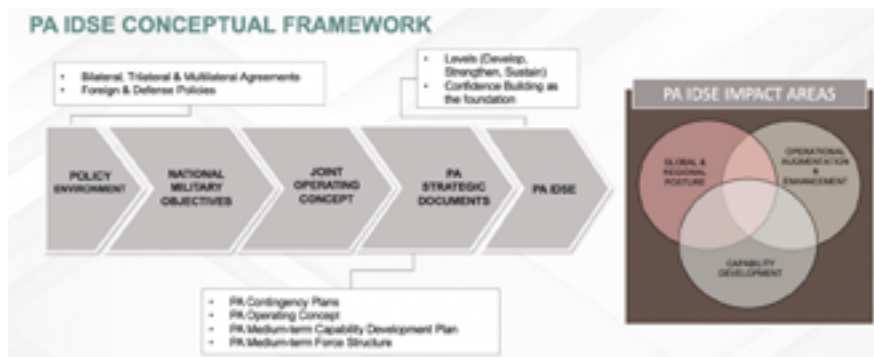


Figure 5. Philippine Army IDSE Conceptual Framework

⁵⁵ Philippine Army, PAM 3-07, "Special Operations". ⁴⁸ Philippine Army, *PA Force Structure Medium-Term Plan*, p. 22

The PA IDSE MTP 2022-2028 specifies how to closely align capability goals with international engagements to achieve more purposive, holistic, and integrated approach to PA IMA to support the attainment of national defense and security objectives. Instead of simply identifying the areas and intensity of engagement per country, the PA IDSE MTP 2022-2028 clearly identifies the concrete materiel and non-materiel outcomes in each of the 25 priority capabilities which may be developed through international engagements; and countries the PA should engage to achieve the said capability goals.

To achieve these various objectives and requirements, three overlapping impact areas of international engagements are identified: Global and Regional Posture, Operational Augmentation and Enhancement, and Capability Development. Engagements with certain countries target a combination of two or even all impact areas—the nexus where the three impact areas intersect thus form the core of PA partnership, with countries inside the intersection being priorities for engagement. The impact areas are designed to help planners in two ways; first, focusing their engagements on the achievement of tangible outcomes or results; and second, prioritize which countries to engage with given the Army's limited resources.⁵⁶

The Future Force

With the Army specifying its capability areas, said required capabilities shall build forces that will defend territorial integrity and sovereignty in an evolving national security environment. The PA must be able to field a force that shall conduct combined arms and joint operations. Combined arms seek to integrate the different capabilities of the Army to achieve mutually complementary effects capable of overwhelming enemy forces.⁵⁷

The Brigade Combat Team (BCT) plays a vital role in territorial defense and notably in hybrid warfare. Yet it is also crucial during internal security operations should the need arise. The mission of the BCT is to conduct combined arms operations as a contingency force in support to the AFP mission⁴⁹. As a highly mobile and modular force, this unit shall counter the adversary's strengths and exploit weaknesses. It integrates the various capabilities of the PA into a single major unit that is lean yet hard-hitting, as shown in its structure (Figure 6).

⁵⁶ While it is recognized that the foremost goal of IDSE should be towards capability development and operational augmentation, IDSE can also help the Army in other crucial areas such as Global and Regional Posture and image-building, and the forging or maintenance of alliances with strategic partnerships through confidence-building activities.

⁵⁷ Philippine Army, *PA Force Structure Medium-Term Plan*, p. 112

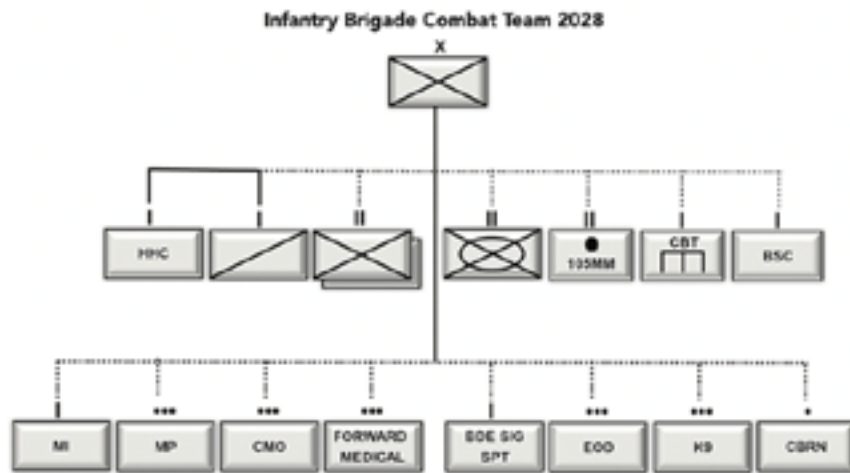


Figure 6. Structure of PA Infantry Brigade Combat Team by 2028

CONCLUSION and RECOMMENDATIONS

Threats that the Philippines currently faces are bound to become more complex and sophisticated as they adapt to global trends in the security environment. The defense sector must thus have the capacity to constantly be in step with (or two steps ahead of) these changes, and be able to respond to how ever these changes impact upon the nation's security. In this regard, having a good understanding of the future of warfare for the Philippines is a useful tool for planners and decision-makers in their crafting of development programs that are strategic, yet practical.

This paper attempted to articulate multiple desired end-states for different scenarios of concern in the Philippines' future strategic environment. It also proposed different strategies in the shape of causal hypotheses that address each scenario; and explained how current capability development efforts aim to capacitate Philippine ground forces for future operations. The most tangible expression of these efforts in the PA's force structure is the BCT. However, such an exercise is only a small step towards the development of a robust strategic framework. This paper also recognizes that the strategy concept would require the supporting structure of the State, particularly those of the other government agencies and the private sector. It is thus important to consider different concepts for

integrating these structures to Army operations and capabilities. Thus, the writers of this research paper would recommend the following:

1. Study and development of operating concepts for joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational efforts to gain clarity on how the various organs of the government would contribute towards the strategy and land defense; and
2. Thereafter, the study and development of supporting policies and laws that will capacitate the Army to tap on the resources and influence of various stakeholders to shape the environment for cognitive, asymmetric and maneuver warfare, deter adversaries from pursuing violent actions, and consolidate manpower for territorial defense.

The theories of victory found in this paper were derived from the PA's concept of landpower maneuver, thus heavily focusing on the use of land forces. The AFP's drive to build a streamlined and collaborative between force providers and force employer through the JOC would require not only the production of similar theories from other Major Services but also a rigorous process of alignment and assimilation of such inputs to produce workable Joint Force strategies for all scenarios. Furthermore, such theories of victory will have to be vigorously tested and assessed to ensure both their relevance and reliability if the projected scenarios do manifest in the future. This will involve high-level debates and discussions among military strategists as well as various war gaming exercises.

At the end of the day, theories of victory are just that: theories. For the Philippine Army, the objective is to achieve an end state where threats are deterred to start or continue conflict, by exploiting opportunities in all domains and dimensions of the security architecture. The only way to truly test the effectiveness of such theory, as others, would be with an assessment during actual conflict. Yet many ways exist to refine theories further in anticipation of their use in the field and these are the actions which await the Philippine defense community moving forward.

**President's Papers:
The Future of Philippine Warfare Vol II**

PHILIPPINE AIR FORCE THEORY OF VICTORY

Office of the Assistant Chief of Air Staff for Plans, A5
Philippine Airforce

Abstract. As with the current situation, the Philippine Air Force (PAF) views the future security environment as volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous. This view can be attributed to the political, economic, social, geographic, technological, and environmental influences and trends that have impacted our society. Moreover, these influences and trends also brought along emerging threats and challenges, which could hamper either the PAF's growth in terms of capability or the performance of its and the Armed Forces of the Philippines' (AFP) future missions. For instance, the current great power competition between the United States and China increased the tension in the West Philippine Sea, which could escalate into a limited war with the Philippines being dragged into the fray. Nevertheless, the PAF as a major service must be prepared to be part of the whole AFP force that will address these security threats and challenges.

The PAF intends to contend with the above-mentioned future security environment with the flexible implementation of its Integrated Air Operations Concept (IAOC). The PAF IAOC fully supports the Joint Operations Concept (JOC), the AFP capstone concept for conducting joint operations in a projected future operating environment. To be adaptable and responsive, the PAF will adopt the Agile Combat Employment (ACE) concept to further enhance jointness and integration with the AFP Joint Force. The PAF believes that successfully implementing the concepts will contribute to the attainment of the National Military Objectives (NMOs) and, subsequently, victory.

However, the PAF's IAOC entails that the critical gaps in its core system capability requirements be addressed for the concept to be successfully implemented. The PAF Flight Plan 2028 focuses on further enhancing the capabilities needed under the IAOC's six core systems, and prescribes the capability the PAF needs to modernize to attain victory. The Flight Plan would guide the PAF in elevating its joint and combined forces capabilities by becoming a ready, efficient, and effective organization. As a ready, efficient, and effective organization, the PAF could help support the AFP in achieving the NMOs, which is its theory of achieving victory.

INTRODUCTION

"It is necessary for us to change radically, not only our institutions, but also our way of living and thinking" – Apolinario Mabini, "Sublime Paralytic" Revolutionary Leader, Filipino Hero

The Philippine government envisions ending the local threat by 2022 and transitioning the AFP for territorial defense¹. The achievement of this goal will significantly benefit the PAF as it will be able to focus on its

¹ Armed Forces of the Philippines, *Basic War Plans* (2020)

mandate of defending our country's airspace, be it for external defense or operations other than war. Further, the termination of local hostilities would mean a renewed focus on acquiring and developing the PAF's critical assets and systems through the AFP Modernization Program. Taking off from the first book, the *Future of Philippine Warfare Vol. 1*², the PAF's Theory of Victory centers on the 'what' and the 'how' the capabilities needed by the PAF address future and emerging threats and challenges. To satisfy its objectives, this paper seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the view of the PAF on the future operating environment?
2. How does the PAF intend to address emerging security threats and challenges? and;
3. What are the capability requirements of the PAF to address current and emerging threats effectively?

This paper establishes that the PAF's victory shall be achieved by attaining the National Military Objectives (NMOs). The attainment of NMOs shall be possible with the agile employment of the necessary PAF Integrated Air Operations capabilities adaptable to modern warfare and aligned with the AFP's Joint Operating Concept. To expound on this idea, the paper is divided into three parts. First, the paper will discuss the future operating environment based on the output of the PAF Strategy Refresh Workshop 2021. The security trends will be presented, particularly the current, emerging, and future security threats and challenges of our country. Second, it will explain how the PAF intends to address emerging security threats and challenges. It will present how the PAF contributes to the joint force through its concept for the employment of Air Power. It will also highlight how the PAF capabilities shall be employed using the Agile Combat Employment concept. Lastly, it will emphasize that for the PAF to address the NMOs, the critical gaps in the capability requirements for the PAF's Air Power employment concept need to be addressed.

PAF'S FUTURE OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

Security Trends and Influences. In a constantly evolving world, influences and trends have significantly impacted our society, and these have become a way of life over time. Influences and trends also affected the country's security and stability. The PAF views its future operating environment as the amalgamation and progression of current conditions,

² National Defense College of the Philippines, *President's Papers Vol 1: The Future of Philippine Warfare* (Quezon City: National Defense College of the Philippines, 2021)

circumstances, influences, and trends that will directly or indirectly affect the organization and its mission in the future. The following are identified as major security trends:

Political Factors. Political stability is necessary to have a secured and developed state. Southeast Asia is considered home to the world's fastest-growing economy and, most notably, to 650 million people. As such, it is regarded as a strategic and essential region by China and the United States; subsequently, both are determinedly growing their influence in the area³.

The constant competition between the United States and China for global hegemony has caused disparity and inequality economically, militarily, and politically in the different regions of the world. If this competition continues, further inequality, corruption, and environmental degradation may persist⁴.

For the past six years, the Philippines 'hedged' itself between the two great powers and strengthened relationships with other countries such as Japan, South Korea, and Australia based on shared interests, mutual cooperation, economic integration, and cultural inclusiveness⁵.

Economic Factors. The global economy was severely affected by the COVID – 19 pandemic. Oil prices fluctuated due to the rising demands with limited production, but the global economy forecast initially seemed optimistic with the rise of vaccination rates. However, the Ukraine-Russia conflict provoked Western-imposed sanctions on Russia, posing a challenge for the global economy as it hampered growth and put the global inflation level upwards. The effect of sanctioning the 11th largest economy in the world (according to the International Monetary Fund) spread in sequence from the big countries that are major import partners of Russia, such as the US, Germany, France, Italy, and China, to these countries' trading partners such as the Philippines.

Moreover, the US-China trade war is also a key consideration in the potential increase of global economic instability. The United States Strategic Competition Act of 2021 identifies China as the strategic competitor of the United States in economics, technology, and military technology⁵. Bearing in

³ Yen Nee Lee, "China's influence in Southeast Asia is growing - and the U.S. has some catching up to do", CNBC, 12 June 2020, <https://www.cnbc.com/2020/06/12/china-is-more-powerful-than-the-us-in-southeast-asia-csis-survey-shows.html>

⁴ The National Academies Press, "Chapter 9 Military and Economic Implications of Science and Technology Developments". *S&T strategies of six countries: Implications for the United States*, 2020

⁵ Sara Hsu, "Senate's Strategic Competition Act Will Make China-US Relations Worse, Not Better", *The Diplomat*, 2021, <https://thediplomat.com/2021/04/senates-strategic-competition-act-will-make-china-us-relations-worse-not-better/>

mind, this trade war between China and US could lead to either a beneficial trade redirection and relocation for the Philippines, or the risk of further conflict escalation in the West Philippines Sea through a proxy war between the two superpowers.

In the Southeast Asian region, the Asian Development Bank⁶ reports that the ASEAN countries have and will continue to increase their global output and trade. The ASEAN inter-dependence and collective leadership has provided the region with political stability. Currently, China has a growing influence over the Southeast Asian region while the United States is slowly backing away.

Locally, the Philippines has maintained its BBB+ credit rating, which could give the country more access to capital sources. The outgoing President recently signed Republic Act 11647, easing restrictions and requirements on foreign ownership of businesses in the country. This law could encourage more foreign direct investments to boost the economy further. The Build, Build, Build Program, alongside the initiative to further strengthen the cybersecurity and digitalization of the country, is expected to alleviate and respond to improve the lives of the Filipino people in the new normal.

Another consideration is the potential of cryptocurrency. Bitcoin was created in 2009 alongside the blockchain; it provided a convenient channel for the market to raise money without engaging in venture capital and to trade without going through a stock exchange. Furthermore, cryptocurrencies provide decentralized currencies, enabling users an easier transaction as it does not need to be checked by a third-party channel⁷. Nevertheless, with the rampant development of cryptocurrency, analysts suggest that by 2030, bitcoin will have tripled by then. Furthermore, it is said that regulations, as well as mainstreaming cryptocurrency, are considered to be inevitable in the coming years.

Social and Demographic Factors. There has been a shift in global population and demographics; for the first time in centuries, the global population is expected to decline. With increased awareness, education, and access to contraception, women's fertility rate is expected to slow down⁸.

6 Asian Development Bank, "GDP Growth in Asia and the Pacific, Asian Development Outlook (ADO)", ADB Data Library, <https://data.adb.org/dataset/gdp-growth-asia-and-pacific-asian-development-outlook>

7 Yukun Liu et. al., "Common Risks Factors in Cryptocurrency", Wiley Online Library, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/jofi.13119>

8 United Nations Department of Economics and Social Affairs, "World population projected to reach 9.8 billion in 2050, and 11.2 billion in 2100", 21 June 2017, <https://www.un.org/development/desa/en/news/population/world-population-prospects-2017.html>

However, the same could not be said in the Philippines, as the country's population is expected to increase in 2040. With the increase in population, the younger and working generation is projected to spur economic growth within the country⁹.

Currently, generation Z is the political generation. Sociologists classify and describe them as work-centered, family-oriented, traditional, seasoned, decisive, and multi-taskers, as compared to the Millennials or the technological generations who are considered to be tech-savvy, carefree, laid-back, proud, individualistic, self-centered, arrogant, energetic, and adventurous¹⁰. Consequently, both Generation Z and the Millennials are considered to be the country's future and working force¹¹. Moreover, the rapid advancement of technology has further affected people's lives and changed how society perceives the world. It brought with it the potential to further revolutionize our world with the extensive use of the internet and social media¹².

On the other hand, the Philippine government, through the Philippine Education For All (EFA) 2015 National Plans, aims to amend to a more holistic education system in the country, which is further amplified by the Philippine Development Plan 2011-2016, which aims to provide a platform to fulfill the aims of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals to have a sustainable quality of education by 2030¹³. A more quality education system would result in a higher literacy rate, thus creating more skilled workers for our country.

Lastly, the urbanization of regions III & IV could potentially alleviate Metro Manila congestion¹⁴ and provide new job and educational

9 Air Force Strategic Management Office, "Trend: Economic; Social and Demographic; Geographic; Technology Evolution," *PAF Future Operating Environment 2021*, (Pasay City: Philippine Air Force, 2021), 2, 19, 23, 49.

10 Helen Salvosa and Maria Regina Hechanova, "Generational differences and implicit leadership schemas in the Philippine workforce", *Leadership and Organizational Development Journal*, Vol. 42, No.1, 47 <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/LODJ-08-2018-0314/full/html?skipTracking=true>

11 Salvosa and Hechanova, "Generational differences and implicit leadership schemas in the Philippine workforce", 48-60

12 M Hilyer, "Here's how technology has changed the world since 2000", *World Economic Forum*, 18 November 2020, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/11/heres-how-technology-has-changed-and-changed-us-over-the-past-20-years/> 000

13 Nicholas Burbules, et al., "Five trends of Education and Technology in a sustainable future." *Geography and Sustainability*, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geosus.2020.05.001>

14 Josie B Perez, "Urban Population in the Philippines", *Philippine Statistics Authority*, 21 March 2019, <https://psa.gov.ph/content/urban-population-philippines-results-2015-census-population>

opportunities and better living opportunities without going to the country's capital¹⁵.

Geographic Area Factors. Regarding geographic factors, the East-China Sea, Taiwan Strait, and the Korean Peninsula are potential flashpoints that could undermine international security and stability. In addition, the West Philippine Sea and the larger South China Sea are still considered to be highly contested areas in the Asia Pacific region, with the different claimants vying for control and resources. The Ukraine- Russia war could also spill over globally if the war continues.

As the global threat continues to loom over, the ongoing Ukraine - Russian war shows the potential of asymmetric warfare in both the present and the future of warfare. The use of pervasive inexpensive commercial technology, especially citizen-empowering social networks and crowdsourcing, has been helpful for Ukraine. We can learn from the tactics of Ukraine how we can prepare for the future¹⁶.

The Sabah dispute between the Philippines and Malaysia is considered one of the longest disputes in Southeast Asia, lasting over 60 years. On one side, Malaysians claim that Sabah or formally known as North Borneo was inherited by Malaysia when the British gave Malaysia its sovereignty over its territory, which included the Borneo where Sabah lies¹⁷. Conversely, the Philippines has maintained its stance that portions of Sabah or North Borneo is part of its territory. They claim that Sabah belongs to the Sultanate of Sulu and that the British only leased Sabah from the Philippine government. This action caused tensions and strained the bilateral relations between Malaysia and the Philippines. Nevertheless, the Sabah issue is considered unsolved because of the contending claims between Malaysia and the Philippines, and only the British North Borneo Company or the British government will know the answer to that matter¹⁸.

15 Judy Baker and Makiko Watanabe, "Unlocking the Philippines' urbanization potential", World Bank Blogs, 20 September 2017, <https://blogs.worldbank.org/eastasiapacific/unlocking-the-philippines-urbanization-potential>

16 Andy Kessler, "Ukraine's Asymmetric War", *The Wall Street Journal*, 27 March 2022 <https://www.wsj.com/articles/ukraine-asymmetric-war-technology-starlink-mariupol-theater-collapse-russia-explosives-internet-drones-weapons-11648400672>

17 Francesca Regalado, "Malaysia's spat with Philippines over Sabah: Five things to know", *Nikkei Asia Review*, 29 September 2020, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/Malaysia-s-spat-with-Philippines-over-Sabah-Five-things-to-know>

18 Anna Malindog-Uy, "Sabah: Malaysia's or Philippines'?", *The ASEAN Post*, 08 October 2020, <https://theaseanpost.com/article/sabah-malaysias-or-philippines>

One thing is for certain is that for as long as there is no clarity, the Sabah issue will continue to be a thorn in the relations between Malaysia and the Philippines¹⁹.

Lastly, the Philippine Rise, known as Benham Rise, was awarded by the United Nations to the Philippines last 2012 as an extension of its continental shelf. Hence, the Philippines has the exclusive right to explore and exploit the resources there²⁰ President Rodrigo Duterte has declared the Philippine Rise as a Marine Reserve Resource, thus making it a no-take zone and must be protected from abuse and misuse²¹.

Technology Evolution. The 4th and 5th Industrial Revolutions encompassing artificial intelligence, robotics, 3D printing, automation, data analytics, quantum computing, cloud computing, Biotechnology/Nano-Tech, alternate reality, and simulation will be widely used commercially and in the AFP²² Green Technology and Sustainable Development will be more prevalent, and there will be more clean energy and less dependence on fossil fuels²³. 3D Printing and "Digital Twin" Design & Maintenance will improve leaps and bounds. Genetic Engineering research will become a potent factor in security and warfare. Lastly, using Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicles (UCAV) during conflicts will be more prevalent.

Due to the pandemic, there was a drastic and sudden shift in using the Internet and digital online platforms. Vulnerabilities posed as a way for malicious attackers and hackers to target individuals, organizations, and institutions. Digital crimes have also increased during the pandemic. The heightened need to shift toward digital and online platforms poses risks that may endanger users instead of benefiting them²⁴.

19 Ibid

20 Department of Foreign Affairs, "Philippine Rise as Marine Protected Area", 15 May 2018, <https://newdelhi.pe.dfa.gov.ph/index.php/newsroom/embassy-news/506-philippine-rise-as-marine-protected-area>

21 World Wildlife Fund, "The case for protecting Benham Rise", 22 June 2018, https://wwf.panda.org/wwf_news/?329835/The-case-for-protecting-Benham-Rise

22 Elmer Dadios, et al., "Preparing the Philippines for the Fourth Industrial Revolution: A Scoping Study", *PIDS Discussion Paper Series No. 2018-11*, Philippine Institute for Development Studies, August 2018 <https://pidswebs.pids.gov.ph/CDN/PUBLICATIONS/pidsdps1811.pdf>

23 N. Rodil, "Harnessing Science and Technology for Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Development", National Academy of Science and Technology, 13 April 2016, <https://www.nast.ph/index.php/13-news-press-releases/249-harnessing-science-and-technology-for-poverty-reduction-and-sustainable-development>

24 Angel Avera, et.al., *Cybersecurity in the Philippines: Global Context and Local Challenges.*, Asia Foundation, March 2022, <https://asiafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Cybersecurity-in-the-Philippines-Global-Context-and-Local-Challenges-.pdf>

Cyberwarfare is no longer considered a future trend in warfare but rather a more notable and dangerous trend. Low cyber security could mean malicious attackers, or even states can use this vulnerability to attack another state²⁵.

Environmental Factors. The environment is not considered a massive factor in conflicts; nevertheless, environmental degradation can cause rifts and internal or external conflicts. Also, conflicts themselves can cause degradation of the environment. Poor ecological and resource practices can increase vulnerability and the risk of conflict²⁶.

Scholars posited that environmental degradation and disruptions could magnify and amplify conflicts and breach security, thus creating war. Disruption and scarcity are not the only motives for conflict²⁷. Regardless, the environment also plays a huge role in shaping society. Conflicts and wars are only one of the devastating consequences that may happen if environmental degradation and disruption will continuously be pursued.

Climate change does not necessarily cause conflicts but can indirectly affect political, economic, and social factors, which can cause conflicts or even wars. Climate change has dramatically impacted our environment, and scientists say that we are currently facing the extinction of certain species of animals and plants. Furthermore, there has been significant deforestation in Amazon rainforests due to consumerism, urbanization, and a growing population. It is also said that global temperatures are expected to increase as well as the ocean level²⁸ (*McClimon, 2019*).

Threats and Challenges. Along with the security trends identified are the following current, emerging, and future security threats and challenges for the Philippines²⁸.

Political instability can cause internal and external conflicts resulting in a lack of trust in the government, division of a state, the rise of insurgency, and potential external disputes with other states, which could hamper the AFP in defending the state;

25 CJ Haughey, "Cyber warfare: What to expect in 2022", Security Intelligence, 22 December 2021, <https://securityintelligence.com/articles/cyber-warfare-what-to-expect-2022>

26 W. Douglas Smith, The connection between environment, conflict and security, MAHB Stanford, 01 May 2018, <https://mahb.stanford.edu/blog/environment-conflict-security/>

27 Ibid

28 Armed Forces of the Philippines, *Future Operating Environment* (2021)

Slow economic recovery owing to the redirection of funds related to COVID-19 response and the impact of the current crisis in Ukraine could slow down the AFP's capability upgrades, especially for external defense;

Increasing tension in the West Philippine Sea and other regional flashpoints could escalate the threat of limited war among major powers dragging other countries into the fray or a possibility of low and medium-intensity conflict;

Increasing trend of cyber-attacks and electronic warfare, the vulnerability of the AFP in the cyber and electromagnetic domain can be exploited by the enemies of the State. This would result in the exploitation of critical data and infrastructure by our adversaries;

Rapid evolution and proliferation of modern weapons, while the AFP remains deficient in technical know-how on modern asymmetric warfare, will position us behind the competition;

Climate change will intensify the effects of natural calamities. It can exacerbate the existing political and economic factors, thus resulting in the potential increase in dissatisfaction with the government and slowing economic recovery. Relatedly, focusing on non-traditional roles may result in another hump in the AFP modernization related to external security and defense; and

There will be a *rise in radicalization and violent extremism*, where local terrorist groups will be more inspired to cause chaos and disruption through physical violence or, in some cases, cybercrime. This phenomenon will further disrupt economic development due to insecurity, thereby threatening the overall well-being of the citizens.

HOW EMERGING THREATS AND CHALLENGES WILL BE ADDRESSED

With the threats and challenges mentioned above, it is essential to develop the right strategies and appropriate capabilities to address them. In addition, the unpredictable security landscape necessitates one to undertake review and assessment of the current strategic and operational concepts for the Armed Forces of the Philippines to be more adaptive, relevant and responsive to the constantly changing environment within the domestic and international security perspectives. In line with this, the AFP's Joint Operating Concept (JOC) prescribes how the AFP will address the above-mentioned future threats through the joint force's development and

employment. On its part, the PAF has the Integrated Air Operations Concept (IAOC), which is aligned with the AFP JOC. The PAF IAOC is composed of interrelated capability systems designed to provide the necessary Air Power support to accomplish the AFP mission. These concepts will be implemented using the Agile Combat Employment (ACE), a proactive and reactive operational scheme of maneuver executed within threat timelines to increase resiliency and survivability.

AFP Joint Operating Concept (JOC)

The AFP JOC is a capstone concept that prescribes how the AFP shall operate as a Joint Force in the future operating environment and describes the force structure and capabilities required by the future Joint Force. As a capstone concept, the JOC guides and synchronizes the development of service-centric operating concepts of the Philippine Army, Philippine Air Force, and Philippine Navy, and the cross-service operating concepts, namely: Air-Sea Concept, Air-Land Concept and Sea-Land Concept across the six (6) operating domains (Figure 1) of land, sea, air, space, cyber and cognitive (JOC, 2020)

The success of joint operations is critically hinged on the proper implementation and appreciation of the force-provider/force-employer concept between and among the Major Services and Unified Commands

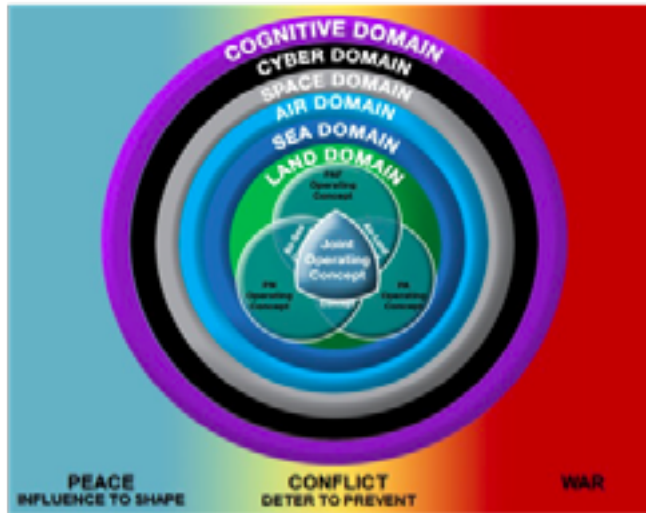


Figure 1: Domains of the Future Operating Environment

(UCs). As a general rule, given an operational mission, the General Headquarters (GHQ), AFP, as force manager, shall provide the "why" or the strategic purpose; the UCs, as force-employer, shall provide the "how" or the operational concept using the JOC in the formulation of their respective campaign plans tailored to their peculiar operating environment; and the Major Services, as force-providers, shall provide the "what" or the units and capabilities required to support the Unified Commands.

PAF Integrated Air Operations Concept

As one of the force providers with the Philippine Army and the Philippine Navy, the PAF's contribution to the AFP JOC is the Integrated Air Operations Concept, a conceptual framework for the employment of air power. It broadly portrays how the PAF conducts its core functions as part of a joint, inter-agency, or multinational force or independently in support of national security objectives; and discusses how the Air Force intends to provide the air power capabilities required by the various mission areas of the AFP. It was developed using the generally accepted principles of warfare to include existing doctrines, frameworks, and processes of the PAF and the AFP, foremost of which are the Air Power Structure Model (Figure 2) (Air Power Manual, 2000), the Air Operations Manual, and the Force Planning Process.

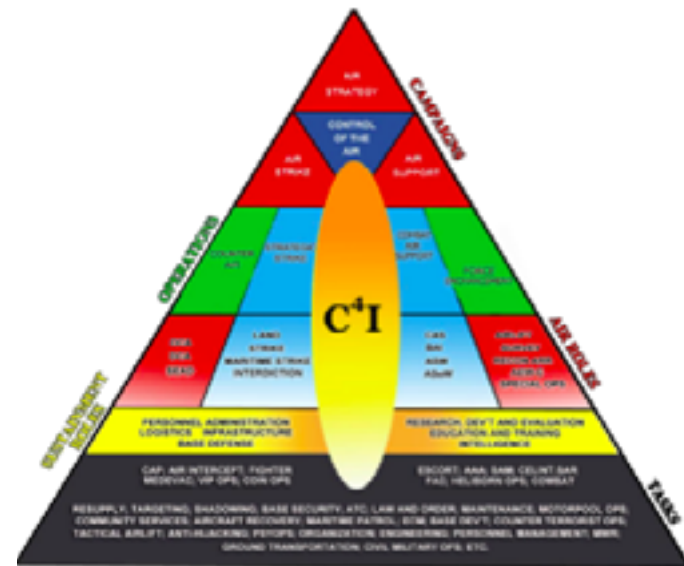


Figure 2: Air Power Structure Model

The PAF IAOC serves two (2) primary purposes. Firstly, regarding force employment, the PAF IAOC prescribes the Air Power capabilities that can be applied in various mission areas of the AFP and aids PAF personnel in planning air operations. Secondly, the PAF IAOC serves as a guide in developing the Air Power capabilities of the PAF through the Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Personnel, Leadership, and Facilities (DOTMPLF) framework.

In addition, the PAF IAOC provides the capabilities of the PAF, which are categorized into six (6) Core Systems, wherein every system can be applied exclusively or in combination with the other systems. It is designed to provide air power requirements for the AFP's various internal and external mission areas. Thus, the IAOC is the PAF's Service Concept that will be applied along with the Service Concepts of the Philippine Army and the Philippine Navy towards realizing the AFP JOC.



Figure 3: Philippine Air Force Integrated Air Operations System

The PAF IAOC is composed of the six (6) core systems (Figure 3) that are interconnected, forming a mesh network derived from their very nature and purpose. The system is safeguarded by Cyber Security (CS) and Electronic Warfare (EW), reinforced by outward conduct of effective Information Operations (IO), striking down the adversary systems in the

human or cognitive domain. The following are the six (6) core systems of the IAOC:

Integrated Air Defense System (IADS). IADS is composed of weapon systems, command and control systems, and detection systems. It constitutes the PAF's capabilities to conduct defensive counter-air missions and utilize active or passive defensive measures to detect, identify, intercept, destroy or neutralize the effectiveness of an adversary. This system will also prevent the adversary from achieving control of the air. The primary purpose of IADS is for territorial defense operations.

Surface Strike System (SSS). SSS provides the capabilities to find, fix, and destroy surface targets, whether these targets are on land or over bodies of water. These are PAF capabilities that will attack to damage or neutralize a target. Strike can employ lethal or nonlethal and kinetic or non-kinetic means to create the desired physical and/or cognitive effect on the adversary.

Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance System (ISRS). ISRS allows the acquisition of real or near-real time, network-centric situational awareness of the PAF's operating environment so that an Air Component Commander or Joint Force Commander as well as operators, can arrive at a timely and well-informed decision. While ISRS is primarily used for territorial defense, security, and stability missions, it also plays a critical role in Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) missions, especially in conducting area surveys and damage assessments. These PAF capabilities enable the other core roles and are aligned with the PAF war fighting function of situational understanding.

Mobility Support System (MSS). MSS provides air mobility capabilities that will rapidly deploy, sustain and redeploy forces and materiel to, from, or within a theater of operation by air. The primary purpose of MSS is to transport personnel and equipment. MSS also plays a significant role in HADR, especially in transporting relief items.

Search and Rescue System (SARS). SARS capabilities will cater to the aggregate military and civil efforts to rescue, release or recover personnel from permissive, uncertain, or hostile environments, whether captured, missing or isolated. This system also provides air capabilities for disaster response and combat search and rescue.

Integrated Command, Control, Communications, and Computer System (IC4S). IC4S integrates and links all Core Systems by enabling the

exchange of information, the interface of components, and the display of a Common Tactical Picture (CTP) among all participating components. The components' CTPs and information from the joint planning network contribute to a Common Operational Picture (COP). The information flow should be as complete, reliable, secure, and as near real-time as possible to support the commander's decision-making cycles. IC4S provides network-centric command and control capabilities to support a Commander's decision-making cycle and permit the delivery of timely, accurate, and proportionate responses.

Furthermore, the IAOC Framework (Figure 4) illustrates the interrelationship between the PAF IAOC and the AFP JOC as the latter achieves the NMOs. The PAF IAOC, through the aforementioned PAF core systems, complements or supports the different lines of effort of the AFP JOC to attain the end states stated in the NMOs across the full spectrum of military operations during peacetime, conflict, or war.



Figure 4: The PAF IAOC Framework

Consequently, the PAF IAOC serves as the service concept that will fill the requirements of the AFP JOC for the tasks required to satisfy the defense gaps as well as the range of operations and Air Power employment options available for the Joint Force Commander. Additionally, the coverage encompasses the operating concepts of all PAF capabilities such as Air Defense (AD); Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR); Internal Security Operations (ISO); and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response (HADR), among others.

The PAF IAOC also caters to all levels of operation as follows:

1. **Strategic Level** – in the event of actual conflict, the concept will support the NMS by providing a model or method on how the AFP can systematically employ Air Power to complement the other Elements of National Power as the AFP pursues to attain the military objectives.
2. **Operational Level** – the IAOC must address the critical emerging challenges, opportunities, defense gaps, and the current capability requirements of the AFP JOC. The core system tasks and forces that compose the PAF IAOC must satisfy the necessities for prompt and sustained air operations for each defense layer. Likewise, this concept will elaborate on how "jointness" can be achieved and how integration elements make joint operations possible, considering the nature of air power and air domain.
3. **Tactical Level** – the expected character of air operations to be performed by each PAF tactical unit within the core systems and the guidelines regarding the required interactions at the tactical level are broadly outlined in this concept. Moreover, functional concepts anchored on this broad concept shall serve as references for the subsequent development of tactical manuals and doctrines. The tactical level starts from the Capability and ends with the Forces portion. The tactical level will cover the tactics, techniques, and procedures of a core system's specific platform or equipment.

Agile Combat Employment (ACE)

Under the AFP JOC, the above-mentioned capabilities of the PAF may be employed together with the other capabilities of the Joint Force using the Agile Combat Employment (ACE)²⁹. ACE is a concept espoused by the United States Air Force (USAF) for non-permanent basing of forward deployed expedition combat forces that are smaller and dispersed. ACE is a proactive and reactive operational scheme of maneuver executed within threat timelines to increase resiliency and survivability while generating combat power throughout the integrated deterrence continuum. It requires the Command to think and conduct operations within the modern operational environment. Likewise, this system will inform relevant and forward-looking concepts and provide a mechanism that will quickly adapt to an ever-changing security environment. ACE consists of five core elements which are as follows:

29 US Air Force, "Agile Combat Employment", *Air Force Doctrine Note 1-21* (2021), 2-11

Posture. Posture is intrinsically tied with other core elements. Forces must be able to rapidly execute operations from various locations with integrated capabilities and interoperability across the core. If properly executed, posture will provide a deterrent to a conflict by being strategically predictable but operationally unpredictable. An effectively tailored posture provides Commanders with expanded force employment options and mitigates operational risks.

Command and Control (C2). Having a centralized command and distributed control is part of the C2 core value of ACE. This core value requires that there should be reliable communication to have smooth and sustainable execution and defense.

Movement and Maneuver. Movement and Maneuver provide the ability and agility to outpace an adversary's action. Maneuver includes expansion of operational footprints and access throughout the theater to provide flexibility, deter adversaries, and support partners and allies.

Protection. Protection posits that active and passive defenses are necessary to address and counter threats in all domains. There should be a robust and layered defense that can protect forces from present and emerging threats.

Examples of this are the capabilities of the Cyber and Space Domain and the utilization of Drones. As operational domains, cyber and space domains will become more critical for deterrence and defense. Thus, PAF/AFP must develop cyber defense capabilities to protect vital military and government facilities and infrastructures against cyber-attacks. Amid these strategic developments, the PAF/AFP should initiate venturing into the domain of space³⁰.

Furthermore, drones are essential and a mainstay in military and warfare capabilities. Other nations are utilizing drones extensively, from search and rescue to surveillance. This capability may also be used to avert attacks on infrastructures and facilities. With the evolving military technology, drone strike technologies are evolving³¹.

Sustainment. Sustainment under ACE states that there is a need for infrastructure innovation and complete visibility of war reserve materiel

30 Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans, J5, Armed Forces of the Philippines, *National Military Strategy* (Quezon City: Armed Forces of the Philippines 2019)

31 Mario Samuel Camacho, "War in Ukraine proves that drones are quickly making tanks obsolete", The Infographics Show, <https://www.theinfographicsshow.com/drones-attack-tanks-obsolete/>

(WRM) and non-WRM equipment as well as innovative logistics and force projection scope of capabilities to address the needs of the Command as its operations grow in scope and scale. Weapons system sustainment is and has been incredibly complex. Decision-makers must not only create sustainment plans to support aging equipment but also navigate the decades of budget battles and changing requirements. The approach should incorporate the following factors: Strategic vision – crafting a flexible, effective, and enduring sustainment strategy that balances competing demands on a weapon system throughout its life cycle readiness; Operational construct – Addressing diverse stakeholder incentives by assigning ownership responsibilities that support the overall strategy; Tactical execution – Constantly ensuring the right people, business processes, and enabling technology are properly inserted to make it all happen³².

To maintain the momentum brought by the modernization program, it needs to generate, intensify, and sustain "knowledge and technology flow" through systematic collaboration and partnership among the triumvirate of Government, Academe, and Industry which is seen to be one of the "holistic" approaches of defense self-reliance of a country. This could be better served if Local Industries could fill in³³.

AFP JOC vis-à-vis PAF FLIGHT PLAN 2028

The need to fully realize the "jointness" of operations within the AFP and its Major Services has been clearly emphasized in the AFP JOC. As a capstone concept, the AFP JOC describes how the integrated and interoperable Joint Force will operate in a projected future operating environment, particularly in addressing current and emerging defense and security threats and challenges. It also highlights the force characteristics necessary to execute the joint mission-essential tasks to guide long-term capability development. With this, the AFP JOC transcends the planning period of 2022-2028 and is designed to be a vital document in the next long-term planning period until 2040.

As prescribed by the Administrative Code of 1987 (EO 292), the PAF is mandated to be responsible for the air defense of the Philippines. To effectively and efficiently perform its mandate, the PAF has established its long-term plan known as the PAF Flight Plan 2028. In this strategic

32 Dennis Schultz, et. al., "Sustainment in the military: Maintain technological advantage over the life span of military systems", Deloitte Insights, 23 July 2019,

33 Department of National Defense, "III. SRDP Strategy: Vision" *Self-Reliant Defense Program*, (Quezon City: Department of National Defense 2021)

roadmap, the PAF envisions becoming a more capable and credible air force responsive to national security and development (Flight Plan 2028, 2014).

To accomplish the PAF's vision, the Flight Plan 2028 caters to both internal and external mission areas mentioned in the NDS of the DND and the NMS of the AFP. The PAF Flight Plan 2028 also focuses on further enhancing the capabilities needed under the PAF's six (6) core systems, namely: IC4S, IADS, ISRS, SRS, MSS, and SSS.

Furthermore, these core systems are projected to ensure that the PAF can elevate its capabilities for joint and combined forces by becoming a ready, efficient, and effective organization. The PAF has also set objectives to improve its operational readiness through the capability enablers (DOPMTLF). These capability enablers are the PAF's material and non-material requirements to ensure that it can provide and employ forces within the levels and standards required by the AFP.

WHAT THE PAF NEEDS TO ATTAIN VICTORY

As emphasized in the National Defense Strategy, the AFP Modernization Program plays a significant role in the implementation of the respective mandates of the AFP and its Major Services, as this entails the identification, development, production, and acquisition of platforms that can address the identified threats (NDS, 2018). In support of the Revised AFP Modernization Act (RA 10349), the AFP and Major Services are advised to ensure interoperability and integration of platforms and weapon systems. These equipment shall be acquired to fill the identified capability gaps.

The discussion regarding the capability gap assessment in this paper is vital in terms of evaluating the readiness of the PAF in the current and ever-changing security environment. This endeavor aims to develop the PAF's capabilities further to provide and fulfill the air power contribution of the Command to the joint operating efforts of the AFP.

As the PAF enters Horizon III of the Revised AFP Modernization Program and finalizes the acquisition projects under Horizon I and Horizon II, there is a need to re-evaluate and update the current capability plans. Identifying the gaps among systems when integrated to carry out different tasks in war fighting is also imperative. As a force provider, the PAF develops its capabilities under the other core systems of the IAOC.

The following are the capability goals and requirements of the PAF that need to be developed or further enhanced:

- a. Robust Air Surveillance and Early Warning capability;
- b. Adequate capability to intercept and neutralize threats composed of the right mix of multi-role fighters and ground-based air defense systems;
- c. Secured PAF IC4S that is integrated into the AFP C4ISTAR for effective command and control;
- d. Electronic warfare capability for defensive and offensive operations;
- e. Cyber warfare capability;
- f. Maritime domain awareness capability;
- g. Fixed and rotary-wing airlift capabilities for rapid deployment of equipment and personnel;
- h. Strike capability to support surface forces;
- i. Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and high yield Explosives (CBRNE) capability; and
- j. Basing and support systems.

In addition, the Philippine Space Agency (PhilSA) commenced the PAF space capabilities initiative as part of its mandate to increase partnership with different sectors that will be included in the research and development in exploring space technology and its applications. Furthermore, this collaboration hopes to develop a research partnership between the two agencies in order to have concept planning and identification of requirements to build the Philippines' sovereign communications and surveillance satellite in order to achieve the strategic goal of securing the nation.

CONCLUSION

The future operating environment is volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous. Geopolitical rivalry among the major powers, regional flashpoints, economic factors, climate change, technological advances, and demographic changes are among the key trends and drivers that create insecurities. Threats to sovereignty and territorial integrity, cyber security, economic security, and human security already exist but are seen to be more pronounced in the coming years.

With the various threats and challenges the country faces, it is important to develop the right strategies and appropriate capabilities to address them. The threats identified cannot be addressed by a single government agency, much less by a single branch of the military. Thus, the PAF refers to the AFP JOC and provides the IAOC as its contribution to the concept of confronting and tackling

our national security challenges. The PAF IAOC comprises six (6) core systems that should be employed depending on the type of threat and desired end state emanating from the broad NMOs. The employment of air power under each of the systems in the IAOC should work in conjunction with the other services and agencies of government to attain synergy and achieve the NMOs. Thus, jointness and effective inter-agency collaboration are essential to achieving national security objectives.

The PAF IAOC's effectiveness depends on the capabilities available for employment. The current capabilities of the PAF must be enhanced, especially for Integrated Air Defense System (IADS), through the acquisition of multi-role fighters and ground-based air defense system and the corresponding command and control system. Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance System (ISRS) for all-domain awareness also need further improvement along with electronic and cyber warfare capabilities. Surface Strike System (SSS) likewise needs enhancement. Moreover, the Mobility Support System (MSS) needs to increase its capacity to address the requirements of military operations, humanitarian assistance, and disaster response. The six core systems are supported and sustained by support systems, especially a secured network of main and forward operating bases. The capability to respond against CBRNE attacks should also be developed.

Furthermore, the employment of our capabilities together with the capabilities of the other Major Services in a proactive and reactive operational scheme of maneuver executed within threat timelines using the core values of Agile Combat Employment (ACE) will increase our resiliency and survivability. As such, under Posture, Forces must be able to rapidly execute operations from various locations with integrated capabilities and interoperability across the core to provide a strategic defense; C2 needs a reliable mode of communication to relay messages and responses required to address the threat; with Movement and Maneuver, the Command will be able to outpace and outwit an enemy as well as provide a flexible platform for friendly forces; Protection posits that active and passive defenses are necessary and needed to address and counter threats in all domain; and lastly, Sustainment entails that there should be constant development and modernization of equipment as well as capabilities as the operation of the Command grows. With the employment of these five (5) core elements, ACE under the umbrella of the AFP JOC will further bring jointness and integration to the Joint Force.

The PAF does not operate in a vacuum but is part of the joint force. When employed seamlessly with surface forces and other government agencies, its air power capabilities will bring victory against Philippine national security threats.

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**President's Papers:
The Future of Philippine Warfare Vol II**

***THEORIZING NAVAL WARFARE: CONDITIONS AND
PRINCIPLES FOR PHILIPPINE NAVAL VICTORY***

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Abstract. The Philippine Navy (PN) remains the military service capable of operating within and beyond the Philippines' maritime territorial boundaries. Its inherent power-projection and territorial defense capabilities, together with the Philippines' strategic location between Asia and the Pacific, allow Manila to maneuver along strategic, political, and diplomatic dimensions through various naval operations targeting adversaries and friendly navies alike. From territorial defense operations to combined maritime exercises in bilateral and multilateral capabilities, navies are often the go-to military instrument for states for strategic communication. For the Philippines, its growing Navy presents significant opportunities to secure Manila's position in its regional strategic goals. From traditional security concerns in the West Philippine Sea to anti-terrorism efforts in Southern Mindanao, the Navy plays an integral part in ensuring effective military responses given the current security environment. However, to ensure the victory of the Philippine Navy in the event of war, the organization needs to evolve from being an input to seapower to becoming the primary lead of the Philippines as an output and shape the existing strategic environment to benefit the Philippines' position in protecting its seas and securing its future through a modern and multi-capable Navy. Through the AADS and the development of the Navy's operating concept, this paper aims to trace the contours of a possible theory for the Navy's victory in warfare.

INTRODUCTION

The US National Intelligence Council's Global Report 2040, titled *A More Contested World*, postulated that the international system would be further contested, uncertain, and conflict-prone in the next two decades. While the world has become more interconnected through technology, migration, and trade, those connections have divided and fragmented people and states¹. The emerging fragmentation thus invites disequilibrium in the existing systems and structures as there is a growing mismatch at all levels. The gaps between challenges and the solutions to address them have heightened. With this more significant imbalance comes contestation in the international community that could trigger the ever-rising tensions, divisions, and competitions in the international arena.²

Likewise, competition between state and non-state actors will likely intensify in the coming years as states increasingly become more reliant and dependent upon access to the global commons (i.e., the oceans, space,

¹ National Intelligence Council (US), ed. *Global Trends 2030: Alternative Worlds: a Publication of the National Intelligence Council*. US Government Printing Office, 2012.

² US National Intelligence Council, *Global Trends 2040: A More Contested World* (March 2021), https://www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/assessments/GlobalTrends_2040.pdf

cyberspace). Thus, maintaining freedom of action in the global commons has been prioritized in states' national objectives. However, this increasing competition in the global commons undermines international stability and causes conflicts and confrontations between states.³ In the global maritime commons, for instance, the Southeast Asian region and particularly the South China Sea (SCS), has become a hotbed for conflicts and confrontations for many years due to its strategic importance especially access to ocean resources and trade channels. Meanwhile, as 2021 unfolds, new strategic trends emerge, such as the resurgence of great-power competition that could lead to new alliances and power configurations.

Challenging ASEAN Centrality in Southeast Asian Naval Security

For many decades, the credibility of 'ASEAN centrality,' which seeks to assert the organization's leadership capacity in hosting multilateral discussion forums, especially between its major dialogue partners (e.g., the US and China), has attracted pessimism⁴. The lack of a clearly defined strategic stance on matters concerning the region has been one of its significant criticisms. It was further highlighted in 2012 when said regional bloc's foreign ministers disagreed on a joint communique – a first in ASEAN's history – due to the SCS dispute. In recent years, ASEAN centrality has been challenged further, with ASEAN countries having different responses to China's increasing assertiveness in the region. The geopolitical rivalry between US and China has pushed governments in the region to tiptoe between the major powers to protect their interests. Since Southeast Asian states are relatively minor players in the grand geopolitical narrative, they are expected to either balance between the US and China or, at most, edge closer to either of these superpowers⁵. Given the asymmetry between Southeast Asian countries and the major powers (US and China), ASEAN countries generally resort to a hedging strategy to cultivate a neutral or middle position, avoid conflictual issues in the SCS, and not be constrained by one policy option.⁶ However, ASEAN centrality is becoming a more

3 UK Ministry of Defence, *Global Strategic Trends 6th Edition: The Future Starts Today* (2018), https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/771309/Global_Strategic_Trends_-_The_Future_Starts_Today.pdf

4 Mueller, Lukas Maximilian. "Challenges to ASEAN centrality and hedging in connectivity governance—regional and national pressure points." *The Pacific Review* 34, no. 5 (2021): 747-777.

5 Marina Kaneti, "ASEAN Must Make the Best of its New Centrality in China's Diplomacy – The Diplomat," December 21, 2021, <https://thediplomat.com/2020/06/asean-must-make-the-best-of-its-new-centrality-in-chinas-diplomacy/>.

6 Evelyn Goh, *Meeting the China Challenge: The U.S. in Southeast Asian Regional Security Strategies*, Policy Studies 16 (Washington: East-West Center, 2005), <https://www.eastwestcenter.org/system/tdf/private/PS016.pdf?file=1&type=node&id=32053>.

unobtainable goal⁷ as the organization is increasingly sidelined in the U.S.-China rivalry.

Philippines' Hedging Strategy in Post-Duterte regime

Similarly, the Philippines is no exception in contending the asymmetric relationship between ASEAN countries and the major powers, mainly US and China. Notwithstanding President Duterte's strong rhetoric against the U.S., the Philippines has continued its hedging behavior between the two countries, taking advantage of available military and economic gains. Despite President Duterte's pro-Sino orientations and shifting away from Aquino's administration's balancing strategy, President Duterte's changing alignment behavior towards China is not a case of bandwagoning since economic and defense cooperation with the US has continued and is maintained.⁸ For instance, the US remains the leading security guarantor for the Philippines (formalized through the Mutual Defense Treaty) even as President Duterte sought to improve bilateral relations with China, notably through economic engagement rather than outright balancing.⁹ In the post-Duterte administration, it may be possible that a balancing policy will eventually be restored. This is based on the security-maximizing logic that a relatively weaker state such as the Philippines will likely align or ally with actors facing the same threat. The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) statements declaring that "the creation of new facts in the water will never give rise to legal right anywhere or anytime" and that "such incidents undermine efforts to build mutual trust" necessary to sustain the positive momentum for ongoing Code of Conduct (CoC) negotiations¹⁰ lend credence to this possibility, despite stronger ties with China in the last three years.

This only shows that state alignment posture is ever evolving, and changes depend on various factors such as leadership, levels of threat, and big power actions.¹¹ So far, while the Marcos Jr. administration mentions not to "...preside over any process that will abandon even one square inch of

7 Mark Valencia, "ASEAN Security 'Centrality' and the South China Sea," August 23, 2018, <https://thediplomat.com/2018/08/asean-security-centrality-and-the-south-china-sea/>.

8 Kuik Cheng-Chwee, "Hedging in Post-Pandemic Asia: What, How, and Why?," *The Asan Forum* (blog), June 6, 2020, <https://theasanforum.org/hedging-in-post-pandemic-asia-what-how-and-why/>.

9 Alfred Gerstl, "The Gradual Softening of the Philippines' Hedging Strategy towards China under President Duterte," *Vestnik NSU. Series: History and Philology* 20 (February 1, 2021): 46–56, <https://doi.org/10.25205/1818-7919-2021-20-1-46-56>.

10 Lucio Blanco Pitlo III, "Why Philippine Solidarity With Vietnam in South China Sea Fishing Row Matters," December 21, 2021, <https://thediplomat.com/2020/04/why-philippine-solidarity-with-vietnam-in-south-china-sea-fishing-row-matters/>.

11 Cheng-Chwee, "Hedging in Post-Pandemic Asia."

territory (sic) of the Republic of the Philippines to any foreign power¹², he maintains the Duterte administration's foreign policy strategy of looking toward China for infrastructure development loans¹³. Corollary to this, future leadership should take into consideration the assumptions discussed in the Future of Naval Warfare I: first, as the country's threat perception is low, national policies and strategies often overlook a possible attack on the country, and second, the US alliance serves as a deterrent against asymmetric forces, the Philippines will likely be left on its own during a possible war, which requires proper military capability planning for single-service and joint military operations.

New Power Configurations: The AUKUS Security Partnership

Philippine foreign policy discussed above demonstrates that maintaining the country's existing defense relationship with traditional allies while engaging other powers and diversifying relations through regional mechanisms are complementing strategies and thus can be pursued simultaneously¹⁴. Further, one of the pillars of Philippine Foreign Policy – preservation and enhancement of national security – highlights that the Philippines' defense and security relationships are designed to manage new realities, thus requiring a continuous expansion of the country's defense and security engagements¹⁵. The Philippines, for instance, recently welcomed the newfound technological-sharing agreement AUKUS (Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States), announced on September 15, 2021. The AUKUS is a three-way commitment between Australia, the UK, and the US centered on the joint development of undersea capabilities such as nuclear-powered submarines (SSN) and artificial intelligence (AI) technology. This pact received mixed reactions from ASEAN countries, as Malaysia and Indonesia voiced their concerns. At the same time, the Philippines and Singapore have backed the AUKUS agreement, stating that this security partnership complements other regional mechanisms and hoped that it could balance the power and strengthen deterrence against China's

12 Philippine Daily Inquirer, "FULL TEXT: President Marcos' 1st Sona | Inquirer News," FULL TEXT: President Marcos' 1st Sona, July 25, 2022, <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1634445/full-text-president-marcos-1st-sona>

13 Reuters, "Marcos Wants Philippines to Renegotiate Loans on China-Backed Rail Projects | Reuters," July 16, 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/philippines-marcos-wants-renegotiate-loans-49-blm-china-backed-rail-projects-2022-07-16/>.

14 Mary Fides A. Quintos, "The Philippines: Hedging in a Post-Arbitration South China Sea?," *Asian Politics & Policy* 10, no. 2 (2018): 261–82, <https://doi.org/10.1111/aspp.12394>.

15 Albert F Del Rosario, "An Independent and Principled Philippine Foreign Policy for Economic Growth," December 21, 2021, <https://dfa.gov.ph/dfa-news/dfa-releasesupdate/1110-an-independent-and-principled-philippine-foreign-policy-for-economic-growth>.

assertiveness in the region¹⁶. However, the AUKUS might have adverse strategic implications, including an arms race in the region and exacerbating longstanding tensions between and among states¹⁷. Nonetheless, it can be hypothesized that the AUKUS alliance might be a prelude to a more complex security environment in the Southeast Asian region, with more non-claimant states joining the bandwagon in the future.

Naval Warfare for the Philippines: Debilitating, Deliberate, and Decisive

The hybridity of threats figures prominently in current conflicts and wars and is projected to likely figure in future warfare scenarios¹⁸. Considering elemental conceptualizations of hybrid warfare, the idea is to employ the amalgamations of varied forms of warfare (conventional, non-conventional, irregular, asymmetric) to overwhelm the opponent through complexity¹⁹. This development pattern is primarily driven by three main contextual factors: a shifting balance in global and regional power, complex interdependence within the international political economy, and more channels for actors to potentially harm – also known as technological convergence²⁰. This drive to challenge the status quo is complemented by the dynamics of the global political economy and captures the essence of the current revisionist agenda.

China presents the most pressing threat to the Philippines. It holds considerably advanced military capabilities and has continually resorted to gray zone campaigns to shape the region's political entities in warfare's maritime, human/cognitive, and even the cyber/electromagnetic spectrum domains. However, the country's standing national policies on security echo a distinct form of 'sea-blindness,' articulating a low-level threat perception with the current regional security environment while focusing mainly on internal and domestic threats. The Philippines' national policies and strategies – the basis of its military strategy, plans, and operations – assumes an independent foreign policy as an effective bulwark against traditional threats removed from the possibility of war and as well as new strategies in conducting gray zone operations (Paculba et al., 68-69). However, China's

16 Madeleine Bond, "Southeast Asian Responses to AUKUS: Arms Racing, Non-Proliferation and Regional Stability," *Asialink*, October 27, 2021, <https://asialink.unimelb.edu.au/insights/southeast-asian-responses-to-aukus-arms-racing,-non-proliferation-and-regional-stability>.

17 Choong, William, and Ian Storey. "Southeast Asian Responses to AUKUS: Arms Racing, Non-Proliferation and Regional Stability." *Perspective. Singapore* (2021).

18 Xylee C Paculba et al., "Future of Philippine Naval Warfare," in *Future of Philippine Warfare*, 1st ed., President's Papers 1 (Quezon City: National Defense College of the Philippines, 2021), 52–77, [http://www.ndcp.edu.ph/wp-content/uploads/presidents%20papers/PP%20Future%20of%20Philippine%20Warfare%20\(Web\).pdf](http://www.ndcp.edu.ph/wp-content/uploads/presidents%20papers/PP%20Future%20of%20Philippine%20Warfare%20(Web).pdf).

19 Hoffman, Frank G. *Conflict in the 21st century: The rise of hybrid wars*. Arlington: Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, 2007.

20 Monaghan, Sean. "Countering hybrid warfare." *Prism* 8, no. 2 (2019): 82-99.

objective to challenge the established hegemon translates to many lines of effort that reflect its revisionist stance and intent for power projection towards its 'island chain' objectives and beyond.

Debilitating: Crippling National Communication Systems

Given the PLA-N and the Philippine Navy's significantly asymmetric naval power balance, a war scenario between Manila and Beijing can be debilitating, deliberate, and definite. Debilitating means that the PLA's cyberwarfare capabilities can easily support the PLA-N's naval operations. On "D-Day," the Philippines should expect multiple Distributed Denial of Service (DDOS) attacks on critical Philippine infrastructures, including electricity, mass transportation and communication, and financial centers, to cripple the Philippine economy lines of communication between Philippine national defense and security agencies. In December 2021, the Philippine Navy (PN), the rest of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), and the DFA were victims of Chinese cyberattacks presumed to be intelligence-gathering operations. Similarly, Myanmar, Laos, Singapore, Thailand, and Cambodia were also targeted.²¹ These operations should be considered penetration tests to assess the PN's readiness to protect its systems and pre-empt cyberattacks. Given the PN's limited integrated systems between and among its naval assets and the Headquarters (and the Naval Operating Center, NOC), compromised communication lines will force the PN to revert to analog modes of transmission to prevent Chinese interception. As cyberattacks are being conducted, Philippine airwaves may also be compromised with the conduct of information warfare to weaken the will of the national population and feed into defeatist sentiments to prevent loss of life and property.

The lack of secure communications further debilitates national maritime coordination efforts to scramble a best-alternative "force mix" of military and civilian assets along the Philippines' western seaboard. As the Philippines declares a state of national emergency, compromised communication platforms not only cut off Philippine communication with the US to immediately relay national security concerns but also discourage the US from communicating with its embassies and Philippine counterparts in real-time to review the possibility of readying the invocation of Article V of the PH-US Mutual Defense Treaty. There is also the possibility of the US using the intermediary chaos to renege from its mutual defense obligations, to cushion itself from another crisis, given the effects of the Russia-Ukraine war on the global crude oil market.

21 Dexter Cabalza, "PH, Neighbors on Sino Cyberhit List, Says US Firm," INQUIRER.net, December 11, 2021, <https://globalnation.inquirer.net/201025/ph-neighbors-on-sino-cyberhit-list-says-us-firm>.

With communication lines from deployed surface assets cut off from the Headquarters, the maritime environment is thus ripe for the PLA-N to conduct deliberate offensive operations against Manila.

Deliberate: The Failure of Trading Space for Time

Duterte's "realignment" to China was made under the assumption of trading space for time – securing significant economic gains by relegating the SCS disputes to a lower priority²². Regarding Philippine-China political-military relations, defense cooperation was set aside and restructured into non-military, constabulary maritime agency cooperative mechanisms such as the emergent Philippine Coast Guard (PCG)-Chinese Coast Guard staff talks, which aims to adopt confidence-building mechanisms (CBMs) and institutionalize dialogue²³. This meant shelving discussions around territorial disputes and investing in enhancing trust through confidence-building mechanisms to prevent conflict between the claimants.

However, as Beijing cripples the Philippines' maritime defense coordination capabilities, it immediately conducts massive yet measured naval operations against the Philippines. At the same time, the AFP GHQ coordinates with major services to respond to PLA-N and People's Armed Forces Maritime Militia (PAF-MM). The PLA-N's forces are massive in number, estimated to be the largest in the world, with a battle force consisting of 350 platforms, including more than 130 major surface combatants, submarines, ocean-going amphibious ships, mine warfare ships, aircraft carriers, and fleet auxiliaries²⁴. PLA-N forces will utilize all available means to secure all possible choke points and vital areas to exercise control over the "First Island Chain." Apart from swarming tactics, China may likewise utilize mine warfare to help its forces enforce naval blockades. In addition to providing the general data regarding its naval forces, the following figure similarly shows that China is bent on projecting its power outwards towards its island chain objectives (dubbed as a 'transition from the near seas towards protection missions on the far seas').

Chinese-occupied and disputed features in the SCS will have been highly militarized through HF radar outposts, long-range anti-ship cruise

22 Andrea Chloe Wong, "The Philippines' Relations with China: A Pragmatic Perspective Under President Duterte," *Torino World Affairs Institute* 12, no. 51 (December 2017): 3.

23 Frances Mangosing, "PH, China Coast Guards Explore Ways to Boost Cooperation in High-Level Talks," INQUIRER.net, January 21, 2020, <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1217483/ph-china-coast-guards-explore-ways-to-boost-cooperation-in-high-level-talks>.

24 Cordesman, A. H., and G. Hwang. "Updated Report: Chinese Strategy and Military Forces in 2021." *Center for Strategic and International Studies. Recuperado* 26 (2021).

missiles²⁵, and air-defense missile systems.²⁶ Constructed airfields will have the capacity to cater to the PLA's Xian H-6G bombers and Shenyang FC-31 fighters in superior numbers and have previously conducted incursions within the Philippines' Air Defense Identification Zone to exhaust the country's limited number of combined air and naval air assets as part of China's grey zone shaping operations. With China's 59 submarines (4 of which are nuclear-powered), the *Liaoning* and *Shandong* aircraft carriers, 27 destroyers, 59 frigates, 41 corvettes, and other amphibious assets along with the PAF-MM, Chinese maritime forces can easily overpower any existing resistance from the PN's surface assets stationed in the WPS under the AFP's Western Command and the Naval Forces West.²⁷ With the Philippines' minimal surface-to-air missile batteries and lack of second-strike capabilities, Chinese intermediate ballistic missiles (IRBMs) can reach Manila anytime from 6.4 minutes to 4.7 minutes, depending on their launch site.²⁸ Chinese IRBMs can reach Manila in these shown estimates, assuming these fly at an average speed of Mach 10:

- a. Six mins and 22 seconds from Guangzhou
- b. Six mins and 18 seconds from Yulin Naval Base, Hainan
- c. Five mins and 57 seconds from the Paracel Islands
- d. Four mins and 44 seconds from the Spratly Islands

Assuming that the US does not immediately provide reinforcements to support the Philippines' response against Chinese attacks, the PN will activate its strategic forces (i.e., the Fleet-Marine Ready Force) along possible amphibious attack sites along the western seaboard within a conservative estimate of between 3-5 days following the initial cyberattacks to Philippine communication systems and critical national infrastructures. *BRP Sierra Madre* is effectively neutralized either by eliminating stationed PN personnel or sinking the grounded vessel. Philippine-occupied features with multi-purpose infrastructure such as airstrips along the WPS are destroyed by the PLA-N's Xian H-6G bombers. Existing assets will be most likely neutralized with Chinese YJ-12B supersonic anti-ship cruise missiles and the HQ-9B anti-air missiles. Furthermore, Philippine electronic warfare capabilities will be severely challenged by Chinese Electronic Countermeasures (ECMs)

25 These include the YJ-12B, with a 305kg high explosive payload, 545-kilometer range and combat altitude of 15 kilometers above sea level.

26 An example of this is the HQ-9B, with a 200-kilometer range and combat altitude of 30 kilometers above sea level

27 Paculba et al., "Future of Philippine Naval Warfare."

28 "Fast and Furiously Accurate," U.S. Naval Institute, July 1, 2019, <https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2019/july/fast-and-furiously-accurate>.

and Electronic Counter Countermeasures (ECCMs), which detect possible incoming Naval Air Wing (NAW) and Philippine Air Force (PAF) aircraft using High Frequency (HF) radars in *Kagitingan*, *Zamora*, and *Panganiban* reefs. Disabled communication lines and destroyed assets spell major hits to national defense morale, detailing a failure of the time traded for space for national defense development.



Figure 1. West Philippine Sea Map and the Distance of Nearest Chinese Military Bases to Manila

Decisive: Detering alliance-supported Second-Strikes

Following IRBM strikes on Manila and a graduated maritime response, and successfully establishing anti-access and area denial (A2-AD) assets (with a force mix of PAF-MM and PLA-N) in the WPS and Philippines' territorial seas, Chinese informational operations permeate throughout the domestic population and as well as political, economic, and financial elites to ensure limited-to-no resistance. With the lack of a collective defense agreement in ASEAN, SCS claimants, including Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam, and Vietnam, ramp up naval defense deployments along their territorial seas. As the PLA-N occupies the Philippines' western seaboard,

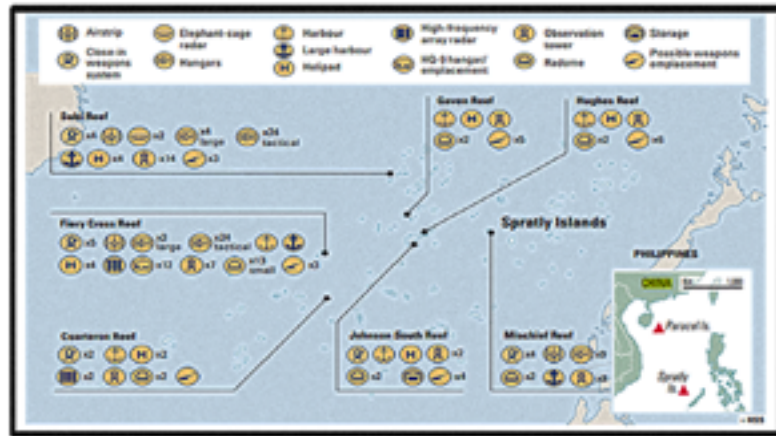


Figure 2. China's Military Infrastructure in the Kalayaan Island Group (Source: Military Balance, 2020)

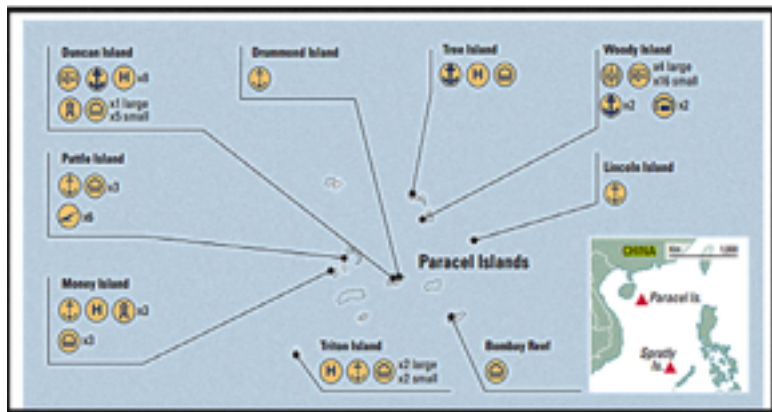


Figure 3. China's Military Infrastructure in the Paracel Islands (Source: Military Balance, 2020)

PLA-N ships rapidly move to secure the "second-island chain" along the Philippine Rise bordering US Territory Guam with a mix of surface assets and as the PLA-N's submarines thanks to its multiple hydrographic survey incursions since 2017.²⁹

29 Steven Stashwick, "China May Have Been Surveying Strategic Waters East of Philippines," accessed March 19, 2022, <https://thediplomat.com/2017/04/china-may-have-been-surveying-strategic-waters-east-of-philippines/>.



Figure 4. China's D-Day Attack Against the Philippines (Future of Philippine Warfare 2020)

Theorizing Naval Warfare

In his seminal work *Theory of International Politics*, Waltz warns against the haphazard use of the word "theory" instead of related concepts such as laws, principles, hypotheses, etc.³⁰ Theory is only "built" when assumptions are developed and, most importantly, confirmed through testing.³¹ Therefore, maritime threats should be enumerated in developing a particular "theory" of naval victory in war and the necessary operations involved to address these. It should also defend its temporal explanatory power on why the pertinent character of these naval operations is justified.³² Accordingly, this Theory should present two (2) points: First, this Theory must explain why such naval operations *ensure* the Navy's victory against an asymmetric naval power balance, and second, defend why the necessary capabilities in the PN's modernization pipeline *maintain* the Philippines' naval strategic

30 Kenneth N Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, Political Science (Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley, 1979).

31 As structural realists assume that states are rationally acting towards self-preservation and threats come from other states, a theory of the Navy's victory must identify the nature of threats it perpetually faces and as well as its assumed character as a naval force.

32 For example, it is not sufficient to say that the West Philippine Sea (WPS) is the Philippines' core security frontier against aggressive hegemonic powers and simply contextualize the Navy's operations in achieving a set of naval security objectives.

advantage to protect its interests. These primary assumptions are pivotal loci of the PN's "theory of naval victory," which should spur reviewing existing strategies and plans toward becoming a modern and multi-capable Navy.

With the strategic "realities" of national maritime security outlined in the earlier section, several assumptions must be made to trace the contours of a theory of naval warfare victory. First, the power balance between China and the Philippines will remain asymmetric. Therefore, the Philippines must ensure the relevance of the PH-US alliance to counteract this disadvantage. National and AFP leadership finds itself in a decades-long difficulty of moving past this history and maintains an asymmetric reliance on the US for external defense.³³ This is characterized by the lack of leadership positions occupied by admirals from the Navy as Chief of Staff, AFP,³⁴ and naval defense proponents as Secretary of National Defense since Philippine independence in 1898.

Nevertheless, this dynamic persists in a post-Duterte foreign policy administration and will be a primary characteristic of the national defense institution. The second assumption is that the United States will be "strategically ambiguous" in its mutual defense commitment to the Philippines, as underscored in its Mutual Defense Treaty. While the 1951 Philippine-US Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) will serve as a significant security guarantee for Philippine national security in the event any aggressor attacks Philippine armed forces, vessels, and aircraft, including in the SCS³⁵, potential economic impacts on the US' (and its allies') supply chains will be a significant consideration in possibly reneging on alliance obligations. Other considerations could include the Philippines' ability to reciprocate, pressure from US strategic partners and corporations to preserve trade relations with China, the US' reputation in upholding alliances, etc. The third assumption is that hot wars will still be an immediate concern for the PN when exercising its territorial defense operations. In 2012, *BRP Gregorio Del Pilar* faced two (2) Chinese maritime surveillance ships resulting in a two-month stand-

33 Renato De Castro, "Developing a Credible Defense Posture for the Philippines: From the Aquino to the Duterte Administrations: Philippines' Efforts for Credible Defense Posture," *Asian Politics & Policy* 9, no. 4 (October 2017): 541–63, <https://doi.org/10.1111/aspp.12353>.

34 Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines, "Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines," Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines, accessed September 30, 2021, <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/featured/afp-chief/>. Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines, "Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines," Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines, accessed September 30, 2021, <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/featured/afp-chief/>.

35 Reuters, "U.S. Repeats Warning to China against Attack on Philippine Forces," July 12, 2021, <https://www.reuters.com/world/china/us-repeats-warning-china-against-attack-philippine-forces-2021-07-12/>.

off prompting Manila to lodge a case against China before the PCA at The Hague.³⁶ Several stand-offs between Manila and Beijing have since occurred with some of the latest developments, including *BRP Cabra* "shooing" away Chinese and Vietnamese vessels.³⁷ This concern also informs the Secretary of National Defense (SND), calling for a more comprehensive MDT.³⁸ These can be classified as "nonwar wars," which characterized the responses of weaker navies short of war toward Chinese gray-zone operations.³⁹ Aside from gray-zone tactics, it must also be assumed that cyberspace will be an essential component of 21st-century hybrid warfare. Current war dynamics between Russia and Ukraine demonstrate the modern use of kinetic capabilities alongside cyber and information warfare. On March 19, 2022, Russia used its Kinzhal hypersonic missiles against Ukraine during its invasion operations alongside massive information warfare throughout cyberspace⁴⁰. With these assumptions⁴¹, an outline for a naval theory of victory can be explored.

The AADS: Foundations of a Naval Theory of Victory

To leverage its position amidst the regional power dynamics and security environment, the Philippines needs to simultaneously protect its national security interests at both the domestic and international levels. Under the broad scope of military modernization (domestic level of approach), the balancing act of capacitating the AFP to deal with internal and external security threats needs to be considered, which has also been underlined as an important precedent to attaining economic security.

The PN's Active Archipelagic Defense Strategy (AADS) is the fundamental articulation of how the PN goes about achieving its naval and maritime objectives (ends) through three (3) mutually supporting strategic approaches (ways), which are, in turn, respectively articulated by their respective strategic concepts (means). In turn, the ends, ways, and means

36 "What Went Before: Panatag Shoal Standoff | Inquirer News," accessed October 5, 2021, <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1421704/what-went-before-panatag-shoal-standoff>.

37 "Coast Guard's BRP Cabra Shoos Away 7 Chinese, Vietnamese Vessels | Inquirer News," accessed October 5, 2021, <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1455388/coast-guards-brp-cabra-shoos-away-7-chinese-vietnamese-vessels>.

38 "Philippines Seeks US Help as It Vows to Ignore China Maritime Law," accessed October 5, 2021, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/9/10/dutertes-defence-chief-says-manila-got-less-from-us-pact>.

39 Sean McFate, *The New Rules of War: Victory in the Age of Durable Disorder*, First edition (New York, NY: William Morrow, 2019).

40 Al Jazeera, "Russia Says It Used Hypersonic Missiles in Ukraine for First Time," accessed March 24, 2022, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/3/19/russia-uses-advanced-hypersonic-missiles-in-ukraine-for-first-tim>.

41 To maintain a certain degree of explanatory power, these assumptions maintain that the primary threats the Navy should address be traditional ones. Non-traditional security threats such as piracy, terrorism, and the persisting insurgency are assumed to be under the purview of national law-enforcement agencies with the Navy playing a supporting role.

are supported by sustainment efforts. As the Joint Operating Concept (JOC), National Military Strategy (NMS), and the AFP Future Force Structure provide the groundwork for joint operational effectivity, the AADS mainly serves as the framework which prescribes how the naval service should be employed. Guided by the 'Influence-Deter-Defend' joint general approach, the AADS, in turn, provides the actionable tasks necessary to execute the JOC's ten (10) Enabling Concepts, validated by how each specific joint enabling concept can be specifically supported within the scope of the AADS' three (3) mutually supporting strategic approaches⁴². In essence, this outlines how the PN side prospectively corroborates with the concept of jointness for battles that may be waged in the tangible air-sea, air-sea-land, and air-land domains, as well as that of cyberspace⁴³.

The AADS and Seapower as an Output

Till describes seapower in two (2) dimensions: as an input and an output. As inputs, seapower is characterized by how states react within their situational maritime strategic environment. These are manifested through the structure and design of maritime agencies such as "...navies, coast guards, the marine of civil-maritime industries...and, where relevant, the contribution of land and air forces."⁴⁴ As the PN was historically designed to complement the strategic intentions of the US in the Asia-Pacific during the Cold War, its capability acquisition and overall strategic culture focused on internal security operations – *de facto* relying on the US 7th Fleet for Manila's external defense.⁴⁵ Despite being an archipelago strategically situated in the region with a rich maritime heritage, the Philippines' naval security apparatus was historically relegated in favor of land forces in addressing non-traditional security threats such as communist insurgencies and terrorism. In other words, the PN continued to be *reactionary* in adjusting to strategic realities informing the Philippine maritime strategy. This paper argues that the 21st century should be a pivotal era for the PN to redefine its position and overall instrumentality, not only in protecting national maritime interests but, more importantly, playing a more significant role in shaping the strategic maritime environment to ensure the best position for the Philippines to defend its maritime security interests. In other words, this means transforming the PN into an instrument of seapower **output**. Till defines 'seapower as an output'

42 Willester Robles, "AFP Joint Operating Concept," 2020.

43 Bayani Curaming, "Analysis of the Nexus Between the AADS and the AFP JOC," 2020.

44 Geoffrey Till, *Seapower: A Guide for the Twenty-First Century*, 2nd ed., Cass (New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2009).

45 US Joint Chiefs of Staff, "Memorandum From the Joint Chiefs of Staff to Secretary of Defense McNamara" (Washington, D.C.: US Joint Chiefs of Staff, March 13, 1965), <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/d304>.

as "...the capacity to influence the behavior of other people or things by what one does at or from the sea."⁴⁶ It is not enough that the Philippines builds a strong and credible Navy; it is far more critical to consider how the PN influences regional maritime trade and its access to domestic and international maritime resources, to further strategically develop its naval force and establish overall maritime supremacy. Mahan notes that seapower allows states to establish sea control effectively and influences the strategic calculus of larger states even in asymmetric conditions.⁴⁷ As an output to seapower, the "post-modern" PN needs to exercise a degree of sea control, employ effective expeditionary operations, promote good order at sea, uphold the rule of law and support a maritime consensus and ensure regional stability, especially over the West Philippine Sea; the earlier sections identify the necessary capabilities required by the PN to perform these functions and be output to Philippine seapower. Considering the characteristics of the strategic maritime environment – connected, opaque, and expansive – the PN aims to anchor its Theory of victory on the AADS' strategic approaches:

Maritime Cooperation and Maritime Operations: Alliance Deterrence

With multiple states claiming parts of the West Philippine Sea as part of their EEZ and/or territorial seas in the case of China, a priority should be modernizing the Navy, which is capable of exercising sea control over Philippine maritime regions. Surface and subsurface systems such as corvettes, frigates, littoral combat ships, and subsurface platforms send two (2) messages: to its allies and strategic partners, Manila is no longer reliant on only diplomatic avenues to enforce international law, especially the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), and the PN is ready to develop its naval diplomatic relations further to identify more significant areas of cooperation, especially on traditional maritime security. While the US alliance continues to serve as a deterrence against adversaries, capability development, especially on "shows of force," cultivates confidence among its ally and strategic partners. Furthermore, PN sea control efforts could be complemented by regional strategic architecture aligned with Manila's maritime security interests, such as the AUKUS and the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad). To its adversaries, force modernization signals that the PN recognizes the need for shows of credible force calibrated by Philippine independent foreign policy to challenge perceived "historical rights" over maritime regions recognized by international law. In the West Philippine

46 Till, *Seapower: A Guide for the Twenty-First Century*.

47 Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660-1783* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1949).

Sea, for example, China's installation of missile systems such as the YJ-12⁴⁸ and HQ-9,⁴⁹ and the deployment of H-6J bombers and FC-31 stealth fighters, which have a combat radius of 1,200kms,⁵⁰ support its militarization of the region. Through acquiring surface, subsurface, and cybersecurity naval capabilities, Manila's diplomatic recourses to ensure the security of the WPS are complemented by a naval force capable of exhibiting minimum credible deterrence against a more significant naval force. Furthermore, a naval force capable of exercising sea control translates into a capacity to sustain naval presence and influence through a greater range of naval operations to deter adversaries, conduct sea denial operations from shore to sea, and exude strategic force projection across the Philippines' maritime strategic environment⁵¹.

One aspect to consider for a naval theory of victory for the Philippines is that it should continue its territorial defense operations within the bounds of national and international law. To signal this, the PN should integrate alliance-building and develop stronger strategic partnerships into its overall naval security calculus. With the political and military support from the US and as well as shared interests with maritime member-states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the PN's TDOs will strengthen the Philippines' position as an advocate of international law as the "great equalizer" among nations, and demonstrate that traditional multilateral institutions and alliances work. Furthermore, there are also developments in US-led security architectures that can be used to enhance PN TDOs further. The Quad and AUKUS should develop confidence for the PN to engage better the Philippines' only treaty ally and its security partners in conducting freedom of navigation operations⁵² within international waters and in its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). Combined operations are a significant component in the PN's Theory of victory through leveraging alliances and strategic partnerships against mutual threats. Previous naval diplomatic gains, e.g., information and intelligence exchange platforms and technology transfer, shall be integral to a broad range of naval operations. These exchanges will also be helpful in the PN's review of naval operational

48 "New Chinese Supersonic Anti-Ship Missile 'YJ-12' Fitted on PLAN's H-6G Bomber," accessed September 29, 2020, <http://www.navyrecognition.com/index.php/news/defence-news/year-2014-news/january-2014-navy-naval-forces-maritime-industry-technology-security-global-news/1504-new-chinese-supersonic-anti-ship-missile-qyj-12q-fitted-on-plans-h-6g-bomber.html>.

49 "New Chinese Supersonic Anti-Ship Missile 'YJ-12' Fitted on PLAN's H-6G Bomber."

50 Sydney J. Freedberg Jr., "China, Russia Boost Pacific Airpower: PACAF Commander Robinson," *Breaking Defense*, September 14, 2014, <https://breakingdefense.com/2015/09/china-russia-boost-pacific-airpower-pacaf-commander-robinson/>.

51 Philippine Navy, "Active Archipelagic Defense Strategy 2017" (Office of Naval Strategic Studies, 2017).

52 Note the lack of capitalization, c.f. the US' "Freedom of Navigation Operations (FONOPS)"

doctrines to match the current dynamics of the region. Furthermore, the combined exercise operations experience is integrated into improving naval operations by using the country's archipelagic maritime configuration, including archipelagic maneuvers.

Another consideration for a naval theory of victory is that its modernization program should support strategic naval operations. The PN, while working with its naval partners in its capacity and capability development, should also pursue a robust and responsive modernization program to improve its standing as a reliable naval partner. The success of the first aspect hinges on the PN's capabilities to respond to *mutual* security interests across alliances and strategic partnerships. One US foreign policy "constant" is that modern allies should be "picking up their weight,"⁵³ and the Philippines should be no exception. Several initiatives to this end should include the development of the Philippines' naval industries to support a domestic-level naval modernization and acquiring the necessary capabilities suitable for a VUCAD environment. Till and Koh, for example, discuss the strategic impact of submarines on Southeast Asian navies. They argue that subsurface capabilities could significantly shift offense/defense dynamics in the region and provide a significant deterrence.⁵⁴ In the same book, Bateman presents the strategic opportunity anti-subsurface warfare capabilities afford navies for unilateral and combined exercises and operations in Southeast Asia⁵⁵.

Maritime Operations and Maritime Situational Awareness: No Longer Shooting in the Dark

The PN can strategically maneuver throughout its strategic maritime environment, considering the SCS's dynamic maritime characteristics of extremely robust sea lines of communication and as well as the various ingress and egress routes to and from the Indian Ocean and the greater Pacific region, with the acquisition of agile and versatile platforms such as corvettes, frigates, littoral combat ships, and strategic sealift vessels. As the PLA-N is equipped with several subsurface capabilities, including unmanned underwater drones and nuclear-powered submarines, the PN is effectively "blind" in one-third of its operational domain (the other two-thirds being the surface and air battlespaces).

53 Michael Green, "Material Advantage: FOIP and U.S. Alliances in Asia," *The Asia Chessboard*, September 14, 2021.

54 Geoffrey Till and Collin Koh Swee Lean, eds., *Naval Modernisation in Southeast Asia, Part Two* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018), <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-58391-4>.

55 Sam Bateman, "Submarine Acquisition in Southeast Asia: The Dangers," in *Naval Modernisation in Southeast Asia, Part Two*, by Collin Koh Swee Lean and Geoffrey Till (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018), 15–28, <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-58391-4>.

While the PN's modernization includes acquiring surface and subsurface assets, surveillance and detection capabilities should also be considered to equip the PN with electronic systems, electronic countermeasure capabilities, and electronic countermeasure capabilities. Electromagnetic capabilities should also be paired with sound cyberwarfare defensive and offensive systems to prevent disruption by Chinese operations. These cyber-capabilities should also be multi-purpose – ready to either support national cyber defense operations to protect critical telecommunications infrastructure or contribute to the adversary's disruption and crippling of communications. Effective surveillance systems in the physical and cyber domains also provide operational and strategic commanders a fuller breadth of informational space to make decisions during war. This would allow effective deployment of strategic maritime forces so that PN can support a more comprehensive wartime response against attacks against national morale and COGs.

The PN's ability to observe China's incursions in its territorial seas and EEZ under the pretext of "innocent passage" is primarily limited to detecting surface vessels such as marine scientific research (MSR) ships. The lack of subsurface detection capabilities is a significant operational gap for the AFP's maritime forces, especially as submarines can first and second-strike capabilities against Philippine Centers of Gravity (COGs). Assuming the worst case of strategic uncertainty on the US' participation in a potential conflict, there is a degree of expectation that the US may play a relatively limited (if any) role in "containing" flashpoints from spilling over the greater Pacific region. Thus, the PN should develop into a maritime force that can sustain expeditionary military operations without the support of its ally and strategic partners. It must be noted that even 'great maritime powers' – especially extra-regional state actors – require the necessary flexibility to adopt more agile and versatile platforms such as corvettes, frigates, and littoral combat ships to operate within the region's narrow seas. Without such escort capacity, deploying large capital ships such as amphibious assault ships or aircraft carriers in hostile narrow seas such as the SCS will prove to be high-risk and prone to miscalculation.⁵⁶ The Philippines must address its longstanding capability requirements regarding primary surface warfare platforms and its counterpart sustainment requirements. Capability development cannot be achieved through leapfrogging, that is, through lofty development targets while bypassing existing capability gaps. The acquisition of frigates, corvettes, anti-submarine helicopters, littoral fast boats, and the development of coast watch systems (along with meeting the respective sustainment/base support and logistics requirements) is a

56 Ristian Atriandi Supriyanto, "The Defence of Narrow Seas in Southeast Asia," East Asia Forum, 2012, <https://www.eastasiaforum.org/2012/10/17/the-defence-of-narrow-seas-in-southeast-asia/>.

welcome step towards addressing this issue. While the decommissioning of World War 2-era surface assets should be considered a desired step towards naval modernization and capability development, the step is not fully complete until the number of decommissioned assets has at least been replenished by newer, more functional surface vessels.

In support of the concepts articulated by the AADS, the development of minelaying serves to deny the maritime space (i.e., the sea) to the adversary. Aside from offensive purposes, mine warfare can also be employed to protect friendly and self-owned terminal areas, shores, and their approaches. Moreover, owing to their degree of plausible deniability, mine warfare provides the State with maneuver room to balance its national interests. For instance, a group of small-power States gaining access to relatively inexpensive means for mine warfare can utilize its area denial and force multiplication effects in addressing existing power asymmetries, and in 'internationalized' power play will always serve to benefit the smaller powers over the great powers.

Another desired A2/AD capability development direction would be the application of shore-based anti-ship missile systems (SBASMs). While not as 'inexpensive' as mine warfare capabilities, SBASMs in confluence with the country's maritime configuration would yield dividends in terms of allowing for greater control over the categorically narrow seas in the region, including the SCS. Utilized collectively within naval strategy, mine warfare, and SBASM capabilities would greatly capacitate the PN in controlling chokepoints and vital waterways and effectively shape and influence the maritime operating environment. The AFP's acquisition of three (3) batteries of surface-to-air missiles from MBDA and the purchase of BrahMos supersonic anti-ship missiles from India are good first steps in this regard. However, their deterrent and operational effectiveness need further scrutiny and development. Furthermore, these acquisitions are dwarfed by the PLA-N's South Sea Fleet alone; therefore, throughout the conflict spectrum, these capabilities should be anchored on a strategic appreciation of the maritime domain and poised to deter rather than defeat.

The PN's modernization should consider surveillance and detection capabilities for electronic systems, electronic countermeasure capabilities, and ECCM. Electromagnetic capabilities should be multi-purpose – ready to support national cyber defense operations to protect critical telecommunications infrastructure from the adversary's disruption and crippling of communications. Effective MSA capabilities also allow the PN to conduct effective minelaying capabilities and subsurface capability maneuverability.

Maritime Cooperation and Maritime Situational Awareness: Supporting Good Order at Sea

As an output of Philippine seapower, the Philippines requires a naval force fully capable of supporting national commitments to international institutions and laws, especially ones ensuring free and open maritime access to the global commons. The PN can and must provide the necessary naval power to complement the Philippines' calls for a rules-based maritime regime in Southeast Asia, thereby contributing to the Philippines' overall exercise of "smart power."⁵⁷ By cooperating with its naval partners, confidence-building efforts contribute to a more robust exchange of information (and hopefully intelligence) between and among strategic partners and alliances. A modern and multi-capable navy strategically communicates the Philippines' readiness to develop the PH-US MDT to significantly higher levels of cooperation, such as enhanced interoperability exercises with the US 7th Fleet; it also better capacitates the Philippines to engage in more robust confidence-building measures with its strategic partners in the Royal Australian Navy (RAN), the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF), and ASEAN naval partners such as the Tentara Nasional Indonesia-Angkatan Laut (TNI-AL) and the Vietnamese People's Navy (VPN). Acquiring the necessary systems compatible to work with the PN's broad set of diplomatic partners also allows the Philippines to participate in multilateral exercises happening within its strategic environment, such as the ANNUALEX between the US, Japan, Germany, Canada, and Malaysia⁵⁸, the Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) which is situated in the greater Pacific ocean (and acts as a counter-buffer against Chinese "island-chain" designs), the ASEAN Maritime Naval Exercises (AMNEX), and in combined operations such as the PN-US7F-JMSDF Exercise SAMA-SAMA, MTA MALPHI-LAUT, MTA Seagull, the Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines Trilateral Cooperation Agreement (TCA), and MTA LUMBAS.

Enhancement of maritime domain awareness (MDA) capabilities is a desired and essential naval capability development target that supports the PN's credibility for diplomacy and promotes an international rules-based order. There are defined the inter-related nuances of the military dimensions of maritime battlespaces,⁵⁹ and three of those definitions that may prove relevant to the Philippine milieu are identified:

57 The overall use of hard and soft power to attain a set of national security objectives. See Nye, *Get Smart: Combining Hard and Soft Power*. 2009.

58 Dzirhan Mahadzir, "U.S. Navy Wraps Up Drills With Partners in Philippine Sea, Strait of Malacca," *USNI News* (blog), December 1, 2021, <https://news.usni.org/2021/12/01/u-s-navy-wraps-up-drills-with-partners-in-philippine-sea-strait-of-malacca>.

59 Ian Speller, *Understanding Naval Warfare* (Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2019).

- *Connectedness* – the globally-interconnected sea space offers a connectivity that 'can be used to strike at a wide range of different places, or can tie together widely dispersed friends and allies... It can be used to mobilize the world's resources or to deny them to an enemy... It would be difficult to overstate the strategic importance of an ability to use or deny the use of a medium that can represent either an intercontinental highway or a barrier to all movement'.
- *Opaqueness* – the world's seas are naturally configured as a vast expanse of space, and specific points of depth remain largely unexplored. It is for these reasons that Speller identifies the military dimension of the world's maritime domain with opacity: '... despite modern surveillance systems, the sea is still a hiding place largely opaque to many sensors, as is demonstrated by the continued effectiveness of mines and submarines (i.e., things under the surface)'.
- *Distance* – due to its natural configuration, time and space in the maritime battlespace tend to be prolonged and expanded, respectively: '... the vastness of the sea not only makes it hard to find an enemy but means that distances work differently in naval warfare. Battles and campaigns occur over a larger distance than they do on land, and ships travel further and, in an operational sense, faster than their land-based counterparts... campaigns can cover thousands of miles'.

The very nature of the maritime operating environment – when conflated with the country's archipelagic configuration featuring large corridors of maritime space – warrants a capable ISR system in place. The subsurface domain of the maritime operating environment, given its heightened 'opacity, connectedness, and distance' as per Speller's definition, will then become an advantageous playing ground for adversaries to exploit at the expense of the country's national interests and security. This warrants the use and development of underwater surveillance systems, an aspect of the PN's capability development that may need due attention, tapping into the possible whole-of-government or even whole-of-nation approaches. By enhancing overall MDA capabilities, the PN stands to raise MDT areas of cooperation significantly, improve confidence between the PN's strategic partners such as RAN and JMSDF, strengthen information exchange contributions with ASEAN navy partners, and increase helpful participation in multilateral exercises (e.g., AMNEX, RIMPAC, MTAs).

CONCLUSION

To effectively implement the aforementioned 'Influence-Deter-Defend' approach, the Philippine Navy requires several strategic capabilities to maximize favorable conditions in the regional security environment to achieve victory, theoretically. A significant assumption in such a discussion is that in a worst-case full-scale war scenario, the Philippines should be able to stand its ground without relying on alliances or partnerships. By and large, as a 'coastal State' in a narrow sea operating environment, the Philippines can utilize asymmetric warfare, hybrid warfare capability build-up, heightened MDA, and A2/AD capabilities to assert control of maritime chokepoints.

Integrating the AADS' A2/AD concept through the NOC's operational design and within the sphere of joint operations and multi-domain warfare is a foundation of the Navy's Theory of victory. The PN A2/AD concept will function within the jointness sphere and follow the AFP's multi-domain capabilities. As the provider of forces within the maritime domain, the PN should capacitate its A2/AD-facing naval operations functions in support of the development of the Joint Force Operating Concept of the Unified Commands.

The PN should be capacitated with asymmetric warfare capabilities to bridge specific capability development gaps, especially against the PLA-N and the PAF-MM. The use of force multiplier platforms such as unmanned systems, mine warfare, and heightened cyberspace capabilities are potentially effective solutions given the Navy's limited resources and human resources. While investment in tech-heavy capabilities likewise also requires investing in peopleware, their asymmetric warfare capabilities become even more relevant due to the quick pacing of military capability build-up in the region. The PN should adhere to the concept of 'futureproofing' or planning and procuring capabilities that will still be relevant in the future. Such asymmetric warfare capabilities should not be used to supplant 'traditional' capability gap requirements relatively wholly; they should be seen as an investment to safeguard against future obsolescence. Given the current military dynamics in the SCS, the Navy should invest in major cyberwarfare defense capabilities to secure naval operational communication lines between assets, the Naval Forces, and AFP area commands, with the Headquarters and the GHQ.

With the strategic implications of the regional security environment, the operating environment, and the appropriate policy environment, identification of priority targets and direction need to be developed alongside the capability development horizon lists. With the end goal of actualizing the

'Influence-Deter-Defend' approach towards achieving the theorized notion of naval victory, it will always be relevant to consider training personnel to capacitate them to effectively operate such prospective platforms to ensure safety during their operational use and quality maintenance. Until such concerns are appropriately addressed, current and future capabilities will not be utilized to the full potential beyond being a simple 'psychological deterrent,' or worse, such capabilities are perpetually relegated to being merely part of a 'wish list,' keeping the Philippines wide open to external naval threats despite being a maritime country with an enormous potential for seapower.

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