



# Canadian Defence Priorities, CF Force Posture and Strategic Readiness

*Linking Government Policy Preferences to Resource  
Allocations*

Michael Roi  
DRDC CORA

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**Defence R&D Canada**  
Centre for Operational Research and Analysis



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Michael L. Roi  
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## **Defence R&D Canada – CORA**

Technical Memorandum  
DRDC CORA TM 2012-289  
December 2012

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Defence R&D Canada – Centre for Operational Research and Analysis (CORA)

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## **Abstract**

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Military planners certainly recognize the importance of readiness to the conduct of operations and the execution of tasks. Nevertheless, there continues to be confusion around the usage of terms readiness and force posture. This Technical Memorandum seeks to bring greater clarity to these terms. By doing so, it demonstrates the vital role played by force posture and strategic readiness in linking the government's defence priorities (policy preferences) to the allocation of resources and the production of military capabilities. The first section of the Technical Memorandum examines the existing usages of the terms readiness, force structure and force posture. This discussion seeks to elucidate these terms in order to establish a solid conceptual base from which to explore the function of force posture direction. Section Two looks specifically at the role of force posture direction in bridging the policy preferences of the government with the allocation of resources in defence planning. All governments and their military advisors face difficulties connecting the aims of defence policy to the preparation of military capabilities. Clearly, military forces must be ready to meet the objectives set by their governments. At the same time, the success of their preparations will be determined in part by how well prepared they are for the actual operational situations in which they are deployed. This study explores this interaction between political imperatives and military judgments and highlights the need to develop a force posture as both the strategic rationale for defence priorities and a mechanism to allocate resources within the Department of National Defence (DND). The conclusion suggests that force posture analysis and discussion can also help to facilitate improved dialogue between civil authorities and their military advisors over the preparation and use of military power.

The research for this Technical Memorandum was conducted under the DRDC Applied Research Program (ARP) project on strategic military planning (PG 0, 10 an), which ended in March 2012.

## Résumé

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Il ne fait aucun doute que les planificateurs militaires reconnaissent l'importance de la disponibilité opérationnelle pour la conduite des opérations et l'exécution des tâches. Néanmoins, la confusion continue à régner en ce qui concerne l'utilisation des termes disponibilité opérationnelle et posture des forces. La présente note technique vise à éclaircir le sens de ces termes. Ce faisant, elle souligne le rôle primordial joué par la posture des forces et la préparation stratégique en établissant un lien entre les priorités du gouvernement en matière de défense (préférences politiques) et l'attribution des ressources ainsi que la production de capacités militaires. La première section de la note technique examine l'usage existant des termes disponibilité opérationnelle, structure des forces et posture des forces. La discussion sur le sujet vise à éclaircir le sens de ces termes dans le but d'échafauder un fondement conceptuel solide à partir duquel il sera possible de lever le voile sur la fonction de l'orientation de la posture des forces. La deuxième section porte sur le rôle de l'orientation de la posture des forces pour l'établissement d'un lien entre les préférences politiques du gouvernement et l'attribution de ressources à la planification de la défense. Tous les gouvernements et leurs conseillers militaires éprouvent de la difficulté à faire se rencontrer la politique de défense et la préparation des capacités militaires. Évidemment, les forces armées doivent être préparées à atteindre les objectifs fixés par leurs gouvernements. Parallèlement, la réussite de la préparation des forces armées dépend en partie de la mesure dans laquelle elles sont prêtes à affronter les contextes opérationnels réels dans lesquels elles sont déployées. La présente étude explore l'interaction entre les impératifs politiques et le jugement des militaires et met en lumière le besoin d'élaborer une nouvelle structure des forces, à la fois en tant que fondement stratégique pour les priorités de défense et en tant que mécanisme d'attribution des ressources au sein du ministère de la Défense nationale (MDN). La conclusion donne à penser que l'analyse de la posture des forces et la tenue d'une discussion sur le sujet peuvent aussi contribuer à favoriser un meilleur dialogue entre les autorités civiles et leurs conseillers militaires au chapitre de la préparation et de l'utilisation de la force militaire.

Les recherches associées à la présente note technique ont été menées dans le cadre du projet du Programme de recherches appliquées (PRA) de RDDC sur la planification militaire stratégique (PG 0, 10 an), qui a pris fin en mars 2012.

## Executive summary

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### **Canadian Defence Priorities, CF Force Posture and Strategic Readiness: Linking Government Policy Preferences to Resource Allocations**

**Michael L. Roi; DRDC CORA TM 2012-289; Defence R&D Canada – CORA, December 2012.**

The focus of this Technical Memorandum concerns the work on strategic readiness that culminated in the development of the Force Posture Directive as the mechanism to ensure coherence between government defence priorities, available resources and the preparation of military capabilities. It begins with an examination of the existing usages of the terms readiness, force structure and force posture with the purpose of clarifying the conceptual confusion around the use of these terms. This is a necessary first step before turning to the subsequent discussion of the function of force posture direction in bridging the policy preferences of the government with the allocation of resources in defence planning.

On the most basic level, military readiness consists of two elements: capability to execute a military task; and the time necessary to bring capability to the point that it is able to perform specified tactical and operational tasks. Readiness is measured in the time it takes for a military element or asset to become effective at the desired state or level to perform designated tactical and operational tasks. Military readiness thus includes measures of time and effectiveness. The ideal mix between the two depends very much on judgements about *when* one's forces must be ready (time) and for *what* level of operational performance (effectiveness), which are determined in turn by assessments of potential opponents and possible operating theatres. Force posture relates to the orientation of one's existing force structure in time and space to deal with the perceived demands of potential operational theatres; it is responsive to government policy direction. Strategic readiness follows from force posture, which sets the readiness requirements across the Canadian Forces (CF).

Resources are allocated to the CF to generate ready forces to meet operational requirements in step with government expectations. Force posture direction provides the necessary bridge linking the government's defence policy preferences or priorities to the preparation of military capabilities for the execution of tasks. As such, the framework encompassing the identification of government defence priorities, force posture direction and readiness management resembles a "strategy-to-tasks" process. The government articulates its expectations and allocates resources to the CF to prepare military capabilities to meet national defence priorities. Most governments articulate their defence priorities in strategic policy documents, sometimes called policy statements. Defence policy statements frequently include pronouncements on the amount of funding the government is prepared to devote to defence, the level of ambition it seeks in global affairs and the range of threats, challenges or opportunities against which it is willing to apply military power. A government's defence priorities will likewise reflect, to a varying degree, external developments in the world that concern decision-makers, which give rise to perceptions of increasing or diminishing threats to a country's national security.

Like other armed forces, the CF must prepare for the future based, in part, on assessments of potential opponents and possible theatres of operations. For the military to plan effectively it is necessary to have a fulsome discussion between the civil authorities and their military advisors on possible adversaries and potential operating environments. Given the size of Canada's armed forces, discussions between civilian decision-makers and their military advisors must also be based on a pragmatic recognition that military preparations cannot possibly be undertaken for every conceivable military challenge in every region of the world. There needs to be a clear sense of priority and a common understanding of what missions and level of effort will be expected of Canadian military contributions in the context of the specific, sometimes unique, military circumstances associated with the different regions of the world. Understanding regional military dynamics requires detailed and ongoing study of contemporary defence developments in a region, continual examination of the specific plans and defence programs of regional actors and, by extension, an analysis of potential conflicts and military challenges that may emerge from regional military circumstances. In developing strategic policy, governments ought to engage their military and civilian defence analysts to help them comprehend military capability developments in a region. This dialogue is necessary for governments to make informed decisions about their defence priorities.

As a result of the current efforts to revise the *Canada First Defence Strategy* and develop a new Force Posture Directive, Canadian decision-makers and defence planners have a unique opportunity to bring greater coherence and alignment to strategic policy and defence planning. This Technical Memorandum suggests that the time is opportune to articulate a new defence policy statement that sets clear Government preferences and priorities, which will guide, in turn, the development of a revised Force Posture Directive. This would likely ensure better use of limited resources and establish the much needed causal chain from national strategic direction to the preparation of CF capabilities.

## Sommaire

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### **Canadian Defence Priorities, CF Force Posture and Strategic Readiness: Linking Government Policy Preferences to Resource Allocations**

**Michael L. Roi; DRDC CORA TM 2012-289; Defence R&D Canada – CORA, December 2012.**

La présente note technique porte principalement sur les travaux de préparation stratégique qui ont culminé avec l'élaboration de la directive sur la posture des forces, qui doit être le mécanisme utilisé pour assurer la cohérence des priorités gouvernementales en matière de défense, des ressources disponibles et de la préparation des capacités militaires. Le tout commence par un examen des usages existants des termes disponibilité opérationnelle, structure des forces et posture des forces dans le but de dissiper la confusion conceptuelle qui en afflige l'usage. Il s'agit d'une étape par laquelle il faut passer avant d'orienter la discussion subséquente vers l'utilité de l'orientation de la posture des forces pour faire le pont entre les préférences politiques du gouvernement et l'attribution de ressources à la planification de la défense.

À la base, la disponibilité militaire est composée de deux éléments : la capacité d'exécuter une tâche militaire et le temps nécessaire pour amener une capacité au niveau requis pour qu'elle puisse exécuter les tâches tactiques et opérationnelles qui lui sont confiées. La disponibilité opérationnelle est mesurée en fonction du temps nécessaire pour que l'efficacité d'un élément ou d'un actif militaire atteigne l'état ou le niveau désiré et, donc, que cet élément ou cet actif puisse accomplir les tâches tactiques et opérationnelles qu'on lui assigne. Par conséquent, la disponibilité militaire se mesure en temps et en efficacité. L'équilibre idéal entre ces deux facteurs dépend largement d'un jugement sur la question de savoir *quand* les forces doivent être prêtes (temps) et pour *quel* niveau de performance opérationnelle (efficacité) elles doivent l'être. Ces deux éléments sont eux-mêmes déterminés à l'issue d'évaluations des adversaires potentiels et des théâtres d'opérations possibles. La posture des forces est liée à l'orientation de la structure des forces existante dans le temps et dans l'espace afin de répondre aux demandes prévues pour les théâtres d'opérations potentiels. La posture des forces dépend de l'orientation de la politique du gouvernement. La préparation stratégique découle de la posture des forces, qui fixe les exigences en matière de disponibilité opérationnelle pour l'ensemble des Forces canadiennes (FC).

Des ressources sont allouées aux FC pour mettre sur pied des forces prêtes à répondre aux exigences opérationnelles conformément aux attentes du gouvernement. L'orientation de la posture des forces fournit les liens nécessaires pour faire le pont entre les préférences ou priorités politiques du gouvernement en matière de défense et la préparation des capacités militaires en vue de l'exécution des tâches. À cet égard, le cadre intégrant la détermination des priorités du gouvernement en matière de défense, l'orientation de la structure des forces et la gestion de la disponibilité opérationnelle ressemble à un processus de type « de la stratégie aux tâches ». Le gouvernement expose ses attentes et attribue des ressources aux FC afin qu'elles préparent leurs

capacités militaires en vue de respecter les priorités fixées pour la défense nationale. La plupart des gouvernements exposent leurs priorités de défense dans des documents de politique stratégiques, que l'on appelle parfois exposés de principe. Les exposés de principe relatifs à la défense contiennent souvent des renseignements au sujet du montant du financement que le gouvernement est prêt à consacrer à la défense, du niveau d'ambition du gouvernement au chapitre des affaires internationales ainsi que de l'éventail des menaces, des difficultés ou des possibilités avec lesquelles le gouvernement désire que ses forces militaires travaillent. Dans le même ordre d'idées, les priorités d'un gouvernement en matière de défense reflètent dans une certaine mesure l'évolution, sur la scène internationale, des situations inquiétant les décideurs. Ce sont ces situations qui donnent l'impression que les menaces planant sur la sécurité nationale croissent ou s'amenuisent.

À l'instar des autres forces armées, les FC doivent en partie fonder leurs préparatifs sur ce qu'on croit que l'avenir leur réserve à l'issue d'évaluations de leurs adversaires potentiels et des théâtres d'opérations possibles. Pour que les militaires puissent concevoir des plans efficaces, il est primordial qu'il y ait une communication franche entre les autorités civiles et leurs conseillers militaires au sujet des adversaires possibles et des environnements opérationnels potentiels. Étant donné la taille des forces armées du Canada, les discussions qui ont lieu entre les décideurs civils et leurs conseillers militaires doivent aussi tenir compte du fait indéniable que les préparatifs militaires ne peuvent tout simplement pas préparer les FC à intervenir dans toutes les situations possibles et dans toutes les régions du monde. Il est indispensable d'avoir une parfaite perception des priorités et une bonne compréhension de la nature des missions que l'on entend confier aux Forces canadiennes et du degré d'effort connexe dans le contexte des circonstances militaires particulières et parfois uniques qui sont associées aux différentes régions du monde. La compréhension de la dynamique militaire d'une région donnée exige l'étude approfondie et continue de l'évolution contemporaine du contexte militaire d'une région, l'examen ininterrompu des plans et des programmes de défense des acteurs de la région et, par extension, une analyse des conflits potentiels et des difficultés d'ordre militaire pouvant découler du contexte militaire régional. Pour l'élaboration de leur politique stratégique, les gouvernements ont avantage à demander la contribution de leurs analystes militaires et civils en matière de défense pour les aider à comprendre l'évolution des capacités militaires dans une région donnée. Ce dialogue est nécessaire pour que les gouvernements puissent prendre des décisions éclairées lors de l'établissement de leurs priorités en matière de défense.

Avec les efforts actuellement déployés pour revoir la Stratégie de défense Le Canada d'abord et élaborer une nouvelle directive sur la posture des forces, les décideurs et planificateurs de la défense du Canada disposent d'une occasion unique d'apporter cohérence et harmonie à la politique stratégique et à la planification de la défense. La présente note technique indique que le moment est bien choisi pour élaborer un nouvel exposé de principe en matière de défense qui établit clairement les préférences et les priorités du gouvernement et qui servira à son tour de fondement pour la préparation d'une directive sur la posture des forces mise à jour. Cela permettrait probablement une utilisation optimale des ressources limitées et l'établissement de la chaîne causale nécessaire pour tisser des liens entre l'orientation stratégique nationale et la préparation des capacités des FC.

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# 1 Introduction

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This Technical Memorandum originated at the Strategic Joint Staff (SJS) during the period 2009–2011 when the efforts of SJS planners focused on two new initiatives: (1) global engagement planning, which involved close collaboration with the Policy Group to establish a more effective framework for focusing and prioritizing Department of National Defence (DND) and Canadian Forces (CF) engagement activities; and (2) the development of a better system for strategic-level management of CF readiness. These two initiatives require mechanisms for translating government defence priorities into concrete departmental plans commensurate with available resources. Policy and SJS staff faced, in other words, the recurring challenge of linking national policy objectives to specific plans within existing resource allocations, a perennial preoccupation of defence planners. In meeting the first challenge, the Policy Group developed the *Global Engagement Strategy (GES)* as a mechanism to guide DND and CF engagement planning. The purpose of this engagement strategy is to provide a framework for the conduct of international defence relations by DND and the CF as well as “to promote coherence in allocation of defence resources by setting clear priorities for engagement and partnerships.”<sup>1</sup> Tackling the second challenge, SJS began to explore ways to enhance the ability of the Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS) to give strategic direction on CF readiness in line with government defence policy. The focus of this Technical Memorandum concerns the work on strategic readiness that culminated in the development of the concept of CF force posture as the mechanism to ensure coherence between government defence priorities, available resources and the preparation of military capabilities. It does not discuss the development of the engagement strategy, which has been examined in a separate publication.<sup>2</sup>

A major impetus to the work on CF strategic readiness came from the discussions in SJS in late 2009 and early 2010 about the potential redeployment of CF capabilities out of Afghanistan that would likely occur with the end of combat operations in July 2011.<sup>3</sup> These discussions not only dealt with the magnitude of the challenge of getting CF capabilities out of Afghanistan after years of operations but also related to what operational tasks and missions the CF ought to be prepared to do immediately upon the cessation of combat operations as well as six, twelve and eighteen months after that date.<sup>4</sup> Working closely with force generators, the Policy Group and the Chief of Program staff, SJS planners eventually developed the CDS Force Posture Directive that set the

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<sup>1</sup> To date, the GES produced by ADM Policy consists of a PowerPoint Presentation of eighty-one slides and an accompanying two-page “place mat” description that summarizes the geographical and functional engagement priorities. Director-General International Security Policy (DGISPol) Draft PowerPoint Presentation “Defence Diplomacy: The Global Engagement Strategy,” 14 March 2011.

<sup>2</sup> See M.L. Roi, “Implementing the Global Engagement Strategy and Why a More Focused Global Engagement Plan is Necessary,” Unclassified DRDC CORA Letter Report (LR) 2011-050, 26 April 2011.

<sup>3</sup> The discussion of Afghanistan redeployment coincided with the work of a small team of operational research scientists from Defence Research and Development Canada (DRDC) who were assisting SJS staff explore software-based tools that could track the readiness of CF units and capabilities. The purpose of this readiness-tracking tool is to provide a strategic level picture of CF readiness that not only captures the current situation but also looks forward out to three years.

<sup>4</sup> The question of what the CF must be in a position to do operationally as of July 2011 affected such prosaic logistical considerations as the priority of equipment and stocks to be returned to Canada.

broad levels of ambitions for CF readiness linked specifically to the six missions outlined in the *Canada First Defence Strategy (CFDS)*.<sup>5</sup>

The CDS Force Posture Directive represented an important step forward in managing the readiness of the CF at the strategic level but it also led to further concerns and challenges. First, it became clear that subsequent changes in policy direction would generate, in turn, a requirement for the revision of extant force posture direction. Second, even in the absence of new policy direction, analysis done by SJS staff in developing the Force Posture Directive revealed that the CF likely did not have the capacity to undertake simultaneously the full *CFDS* mission and task set. This realization underscored the need for further refinement of the force posture direction to ensure coherence between government defence priorities and available resources. With these concerns in mind, the moment seems opportune to examine the concept of force posture and, by extension, the level of specific policy direction required to ensure that CF readiness levels continue to reflect government priorities. There is a unique opportunity in the current circumstances to bring greater strategic coherence and alignment to departmental strategic planning given the ongoing efforts to revise *CFDS* and develop a new Force Posture Directive for fiscal year 2013–2014. Thus, this Technical Memorandum addresses these concerns by explaining the requirement for a strong causal chain – strategic rationale – leading from the Government’s defence priorities through force posture direction to ultimate preparation of CF capabilities.

The first section examines the existing usages of the terms readiness, force structure and force posture with the purpose of clarifying the conceptual confusion around the use of these terms. This is a necessary first step before turning to the subsequent discussion in Section two focusing on the function of force posture direction in bridging the policy preferences of the government with the allocation of resources in defence planning. All governments and their military advisors face difficulties connecting the aims of defence policy to the preparation of military capabilities. Governments generally articulate their expectations in defence policy statements and allocate resources to their armed forces to prepare military capabilities to meet national defence policy priorities. At the same time, the success of armed forces’ preparations will be determined in part by how well prepared they are for the actual operational situations in which they are deployed. Section two explores this interaction between defence policy imperatives and military judgments, and highlights the need for dialogue between civilian decision-makers and their military advisors on the use of Canadian military power.

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<sup>5</sup> CDS Directive – CF Force Posture Directive, July 2011.

## 2 Readiness, Force Structure and Force Posture

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### 2.1 Introduction

This section seeks to bring greater clarity to the terms “Readiness,” “Force Structure” and “Force Posture” and the relationship between them in order to establish the foundation upon which to explore the function of force posture direction in bridging the policy preferences of the government with the allocation of resources in defence planning. There continues to be confusion around the usage of these terms and, in some cases, the parsimony of the definitions leaves room for interpretation and misuse. As Richard Betts points out in his excellent study of *Military Readiness*, there is common agreement that “readiness is vital, yet hardly anyone knows what it is.”<sup>6</sup> This section will clarify and, where necessary, expand on the existing definitions to eliminate some of this conceptual confusion. The starting point for this discussion has been an examination of the existing usages of these terms in North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and Canadian doctrine and official military terminology inventories (banks). In addition, the use of these terms in the specialist and academic literature has also been considered.

### 2.2 Readiness

On the most basic level, military readiness consists of two elements: capability to execute a military task; and the time necessary to bring capability to the point that it is able to perform specified tactical and operational tasks. Below is the NATO definition of readiness, including its subordinate or supporting terms of capability and time:

Readiness is a generic term covering “readiness state” and “readiness time”... Readiness State is the measure of the capability of forces at a given point in time to execute their assigned missions ... Readiness Time is the time within which a unit can be made ready to perform the tasks for which it has been organized, equipped and trained. This time is amplified or measured by indicators of the unit’s current personnel, materiel and training state. It does not include transit time.<sup>7</sup>

The *Interim Directive – CF Readiness*, produced by the Strategic Joint Staff in 2008, incorporates the NATO definition but, using slightly different terms, defines CF Readiness “as a measure of the ability of an element of the CF to undertake an approved task. [It] consists of two components, Operational Capability and Response Time.” Operational Capability, as explained in the *Interim Directive*, is “the actual capability of an element or asset of the CF to perform the mission for which it is organized or designed; [and] Response Time is defined as the maximum

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<sup>6</sup> Richard K. Betts, *Military Readiness. Concepts, Choices, Consequences* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1995), p. 4.

<sup>7</sup> NATO Standardization Agency, NATO Glossary of Terms and Definitions AAP-6(2010). [Hereafter NATO Glossary]. The Canadian equivalent of the NATO definition of “readiness state” is “readiness level,” defined as: “The measure of the capability of forces at a given point in time to execute their assigned missions.” See definition of readiness level on the Defence Terminology Bank (DTB) available at [http://national.mil.ca/search/11\\_e.aspx](http://national.mil.ca/search/11_e.aspx).

time permitted for the designated CF element or asset, to assemble in a specified location possessing the approved Operational Capability, and ready to undertake the assigned task.”<sup>8</sup>

According to the above definitions, readiness is measured in the time it takes for a military element or asset to become effective at the desired state or level to perform designated tactical and operational tasks. Readiness thus includes measures of time or, as Betts calls it “speed,” and effectiveness. As Betts points out,

readiness must combine both speed and effectiveness ... Speed alone, without reference to relative effectiveness against the enemy, cannot be a strategic imperative ... A unit that is available instantaneously is worth little if it is outnumbered ten to one, and hefty capability is useless if it becomes available only after the decisive moment has passed.<sup>9</sup>

The ideal mix between the two depends very much on judgements about *when* one’s forces must be ready (speed) and for *what* level of operational performance (effectiveness), which are determined in turn by government policy preferences as well as assessments of potential opponents and possible operating theatres. As will be argued in the following section, these assessments of potential opponents and possible theatres necessitate dialogue with the government on the basis that specific adversaries and operating circumstances give rise to variations in required military capabilities and readiness levels. To put it another way, government preferences or national security concerns ought to influence the element of speed and levels of effectiveness embodied in CF readiness. There are limits on both speed and effectiveness. One must guard against a situation where the amount of time necessary for a unit to become operationally effective exceeds the speed in which an adversary can achieve a decisive victory. Conversely, if full effectiveness cannot be met before a unit is sent into action, it remains imperative that the unit has, at a minimum, a sufficient level of preparation to avert defeat once engaged.<sup>10</sup> The readiness of one’s forces – the optimum combination of speed and effectiveness – is dependent, therefore, on circumstances, including the proximity, level and persistence of the threat presented by potential opponents.

There is a distinction, of course, when discussing the readiness of individual personnel and that of large units. Modern armed forces are comprised of units and formations (see the discussion of “force structure” below), which are, themselves, aggregates of individual personnel and equipment. Measuring the readiness of individuals and higher formations involves different criteria. “Readiness is easiest to assess,” Betts writes, “at the lowest level: that of individual soldiers, sailors, or airmen. They can be deemed ready for combat if they have the prescribed training and the equipment they are supposed to carry into battle.”<sup>11</sup> This can be described as tactical readiness. It becomes more complex when looking at the readiness of larger units or weapons systems, and the level of complexity rises as the size and composition of forces increases. Moreover, the readiness of “a large force is not necessarily,” in the words of Betts, “the sum of its parts.”<sup>12</sup> The readiness of a large force is more than the sum of the readiness of all the

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<sup>8</sup> Strategic Joint Staff, *Interim Directive – CF Readiness*, 18 December 2008, p. 5.

<sup>9</sup> Betts, *Military Readiness*, pp. 38-39.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.38-39. Betts writes that: “almost any military unit – however undermanned, poorly equipped, or trained – has some measure of capability and can be physically thrown into combat on short notice.”

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.88-89.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p.92.

individual units comprising the force. “Unless the force has achieved proficiency in the command and control of maneuver, fire support, and combat support units,” Betts adds, “the fact that each unit may be ready does not imply that the force is ready.” In other words, the readiness of groupings such as task forces, battle groups and divisions, involving multiple and diverse units, must also encompass the preparations required to bring the overall force up to a level of desired effectiveness. This may be best understood as operational readiness, which is dependent, by extension, on the tactical readiness of the units comprising the larger grouping.

Let us now consider the concept of “strategic readiness.” At the strategic level, one must develop an understanding of “how the various elements of readiness within [a nation’s armed forces] relate to each other over extended periods of time.”<sup>13</sup> Like tactical and operational readiness, strategic readiness also involves elements of speed and effectiveness. But speed and effectiveness must now be measured in a much larger context, effectively in global terms (at least for some nations) and across a myriad of potential operations. Strategic readiness must also incorporate elements of speed and effectiveness in response to multiple and, possibly, concurrent operational demands. In short, one must think about the readiness of one’s military forces at the strategic level in relation to the evolving strategic environment. The military’s strategic environment will be shaped by several factors (see Section 2), including the Government’s priorities and, by extension, the amount of funding it devotes to defence, the level of ambition the government seeks in global affairs, the range of threats, challenges or opportunities against which the government is prepared to apply military power and the actual developments in global security that give rise to increasing or diminishing threats to one’s country. While tactical and operational readiness tends to be managed largely by the military based on available resources, strategic readiness is outward-looking and stems from an ongoing dialogue with the government about its expectations for defence. It is here at the strategic level, against the backdrop of the evolving strategic environment, that the relationship between strategic readiness, force structure and force posture (discussed below) becomes clear.

## 2.3 Force Structure

Before turning to a discussion of force posture, it is important to clarify what is meant by the term force structure. There is no NATO definition of the term force structure. However, the NATO definition of “Order of Battle” or “ORBAT” looks similar to the usage of the term “force structure” that one finds in American specialist or academic literature. ORBAT is, according to NATO, “the identification, strength, command structure, and disposition of the personnel, units, and equipment of any military force.”<sup>14</sup> Force structure in American literature tends to be described as a combination of force size (including numbers of personnel and their aggregation into units and formations) and force composition (sometimes called “force mix”).<sup>15</sup> This can be

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<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.

<sup>14</sup> NATO Glossary

<sup>15</sup> The US Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) defines force structure as “Numbers, size, and composition of the units that comprise our Defense forces; e.g., divisions, ships, airwings.” JCS, *The Official Dictionary of Military Terms* (Washington, DC: Hemisphere Publishing Corporations, 1988), p. 225. For the usage of the term in the specialist literature, see Keith B. Payne, “The Nuclear Posture Review and Deterrence for a New Age,” *Comparative Strategy* 23 (2004), 411-419; idem, “Maintaining Flexible and Resilient Capabilities for Nuclear Deterrence,” *Strategic Studies Quarterly* (Summer 2011), 13-29; Amy F. Wolf, “Nuclear Weapons in U.S. National Security Policy: Past, Present, and Prospects.” CRS Report #RL34226 (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2010); idem, “U.S. Nuclear Weapons:

seen clearly in the abundant literature on US nuclear force structure, which consists of, among other things, the number and types of nuclear warheads [Multiple Independently-targetable Re-entry Vehicles (MIRVs) and Manoeuvrable Re-entry Vehicles (MARVs)], their delivery systems [i.e., Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs), Air and Sea-launched cruise missiles], weapons platforms and their users [i.e., road-mobile launchers, nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs), strategic bombers] as well as basing location and infrastructure [i.e., missile silos, airbases].

Conventional force structure can include military groupings such as platoons, companies and brigades as well as naval strike groups and the US Marine Air-Ground Task Force. Based on historical practices and previous operational experience, these units and formations are designed to complete specific tactical and operational tasks and, depending on their size, even perform major tactical operations. Finally, force structure also concerns the footprint of a country's military both at home and abroad. In short, force structure "establishes the limits of an *existing* force's combat *potential*."<sup>16</sup> Substantial changes to force structure take place over time (measured in years), the result of major increases or decreases in defence funding, the loss of capability without plans for replacement and the introduction of new equipment that either augments considerably the capacity of existing inventories or represents a significant performance improvement over previous systems. As a result, changes to force structure tend to be linked to force development processes and reflected in long-term investment plans.

## 2.4 Force Posture

Given that "force structure" includes size as well as composition and relates to the performance of functions, it is not surprising that it is often confused with the term "force posture." NATO does not have a definition of the term "force posture," which is somewhat surprising since the Alliance has conducted several force posture reviews over the course of its history. The only CF reference comes from the Canadian Army, which identifies Force Posture as: "The sum of the elements of all kinds which characterizes a military force in relation to a given mission."<sup>17</sup> This definition is not sufficiently distinct from force structure or ORBAT. The question remains then how the concept of force posture differs from that of force structure?

It may be best to explain the difference by way of historical example, looking again at US nuclear force structure and force posture during the Cold War and the post-Cold War periods. There has been a remarkable degree of continuity in the composition of US nuclear forces in these two periods. It is certainly true that US nuclear forces continue to be altered by advances in technology. Likewise, there has been a significant reduction in the number of nuclear warheads, delivery systems and infrastructure since the end of the Cold War. In fact, it is the size rather than composition of the force structure that has seen the largest change. The composition of the force

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Policy, Force Structure, and Arms Control Issues." CRS Report #RL30345 (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2001); Hans M. Kristensen, "The Matrix of Deterrence. U.S. Strategic Command Force Structure Studies," (The Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainable Development, 2001). Accessed on 12 October 2011 and available at <http://www.nukestrat.com/pubs/matrix.pdf>; and Michael Moran, "Council on Foreign Relations Background: Modern Military Force Structures." Accessed on 12 October 2011 and available at: <http://www.cfr.org/defensehomeland-security/modern-military-force-structures/p11819>.

<sup>16</sup> Betts, *Military Readiness*, p. 39. Italics in original text.

<sup>17</sup> Canadian Army Repertory of the Army French Terminology Committee.

structure continues to be based on the triad of ICBMs, SSBNs and strategic (heavy) bombers, though the emphasis placed on each element of the triad has been adjusted. This takes us to heart of the distinction between force structure and force posture. Since the end of the Cold War, US nuclear planners have adjusted the readiness of their nuclear forces (i.e., de-alerting the weapons systems and changing the notices to move of units to lengthen the time to make them ready for use), amended the policies governing the usage of weapons and revised targeting doctrine all in an effort to revamp America's nuclear force posture with the objective, like preceding ones, of maintaining the credibility of US nuclear deterrence. Thus, credible deterrence remains the goal, but in modifying the force posture, American military planners are seeking, in the words of Keith Payne, to "transform how we deter" in step with a changed strategic environment.

Force posture, therefore, relates to the orientation of one's existing force structure in time and space to deal with the perceived demands of the immediate and near-term strategic environment; it must be responsive to government policy direction. Force posture orients the force structure through such measures as forward positioning and rebalancing existing and/or setting new strategic readiness targets for the force generators in response to government direction and the strategic environment. Ideally, it is influenced by strategic intelligence and the ability to provide "warnings" of major developments in the strategic environment that over time may require alterations to the positioning and preparations of a nation's forces. In more extreme cases, mounting threats may require more rapid changes in force posture, necessitating greater expenditures as well as accelerated force expansion and rearmament.

## **2.5 Implications for developing a conceptual model for the management of force posture and strategic readiness**

CF force generators have developed mature systems or cycles for managing the readiness of their respective units. Their emphasis has been on tactical and operational readiness. Some critics have suggested that the current readiness approach of the force generators is inward looking and self-referential. Furthermore, it has also been argued that the generation of forces has been driven principally by the cycles of the readiness management systems themselves rather than based on the actual demands of operations or the strategic environment.<sup>18</sup> The absence of a proper mechanism / process for adjusting the CF force posture and the concomitant strategic readiness levels has certainly not helped the force generators manage their respective readiness systems. Developing this process should be a high priority. It requires that the interrelationship between force posture and strategic readiness is fully understood in that there is a recognition that the latter follows from the former. Force posture responds to the strategic environment and is responsive to government direction. Strategic readiness levels are derived from the force posture. The limiting

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<sup>18</sup> For instance, the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) uses the measure of Yearly Flying Rate (YFR) as a basis for air force readiness. In a conversation with the author, a member of the Air Staff suggested that equating YFR with readiness is bit "self-referential." YFR is a target established at the beginning of the year for each fleet and is predicted based upon the amount of force generation required and the historical amount of force employment demanded or the amount of force employment that the centre is willing to fund. YFR is more about money, resources and availability of aircraft. Each fleet then tries to hit the YFR target set for it at the beginning of the year and measures that in the amount of YFR actually flown. For a critique of the Canadian Army (CA) system see, Lieutenant-Colonel (ret'd) David Pentney, "Managed Readiness – Flawed Assumptions, Poor Deductions and Unintended Consequences," *Canadian Army Journal* 10, 1 (Spring 2007), 24-33.

factor is clearly the force structure, which tends to change, as argued above, only with the passage of time. Some might suggest that force posture management can only achieve modest objectives given the rather small force structure of the Canadian Forces. This is a valid observation. Force posture direction focuses more on using existing force structures rather than growing the number of CF personnel or adding new units to the force structure. Nevertheless, even a modest improvement in force posture and strategic readiness direction can improve the performance of the CF in step with government expectations, ensuring a more effective use of limited resources. With time and as the process matures, the genuine deficiencies of the force structure may be revealed, which would certainly be useful to force developers in planning the force of the future. Finally, looking at the CF through the lens of its overall force posture provides an important reference point in assessing the level of risk between meeting government expectations and the reality of what the CF is actually prepared to do.

## 3 Defence Priorities, the Strategic Environment and CF Force Posture

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### 3.1 Introduction

Force posture, as argued in the preceding section, focuses military preparations on the defence priorities of the government and orients the existing force structures in time and space to deal with the perceived demands of the immediate and near-term strategic environment. Strategic readiness follows from force posture, which sets the readiness requirements across the Canadian Forces (CF). Resources are allocated to the force generators to enable them to reach their readiness targets and thus generate ready forces to meet operational requirements in step with government expectations. Force posture direction provides the necessary bridge linking the government's defence policy preferences or priorities to the preparation of military capabilities for the execution of tasks. As such, the framework encompassing the identification of government defence priorities, force posture direction and readiness management resembles the so-called "strategy-to-tasks" process, a methodology for resource allocation developed by the RAND Corporation in the 1980s and 1990s.<sup>19</sup> It is also consistent with the objectives of the Program Activity Architecture (PAA) since the force posture framework connects government's resource allocations in a direct causal chain to the program activities undertaken by force generators to generate ready forces, ensuring the strategic outcome that "National Defence is Ready to meet Government Defence Expectations."<sup>20</sup>

The following discussion looks particularly at the interrelationship between the government's identification of its defence priorities, its understanding of the strategic environment and the development of force posture direction. Most governments articulate their defence priorities in strategic policy documents, sometimes called defence policy statements. These statements often include pronouncements on the amount of funding the government is prepared to devote to defence, the level of ambition it seeks in global affairs and the range of threats, challenges or opportunities against which it is willing to apply military power. A government's defence priorities will likewise reflect, at least in theory, its assessment of external developments in the world that concern decision-makers, which give rise to perceptions of increasing or diminishing threats to a country's national security. Defence policy objectives constitute a statement of what a government wants to achieve through the use of its armed forces given its understanding of the demands of the strategic environment. The more clearly a government defines policy objectives (defence priorities) the more straightforward it is for the military to determine an appropriate

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<sup>19</sup> This methodology "links resource decisions to specific military tasks that require resources, which in turn are linked downward hierarchically from higher-level operational and national security strategies to supporting programs and tasks." Leslie Lewis and C. Robert Roll, "Strategy-to-Task: A Methodology for Resource Allocation and Management." A RAND paper prepared for the Japan/US Operations Research Seminar, Tokyo, Japan, December 6-10, 1993 (Santa Monica: RAND, 1993), p. 1. See also Glenn A. Kent, *A Framework for Defense Planning*. RAND Publication R-3721-AF/OSD (Santa Monica: RAND, 1989).

<sup>20</sup> See PAA Program Descriptions (April 2010), Vice-Chief of the Defence Staff (VCDS) website at <http://vcds.mil.ca/sites/CProg/Resources/PAA/PAA%20Program%20Descriptions%20FINAL%20Apr2010%20EN.doc>. For background on the objectives of the PAA, see the "PAA – Primer" also available on the VCDS website at <http://vcds.mil.ca/sites/page-eng.asp?page=4769>.

force posture and, as a result, prepare capabilities in line with these objectives in a cost effective manner. It is important not to underestimate the challenge of defining clear defence policy objectives. The process demands a solid awareness of global military developments and, more importantly, their implications for a country's national security as well as rigorous analysis of the essential missions and tasks that a military must perform in defence of the country and its interests. Despite the difficulty, governments need to make the effort because defence policy objectives provide the foundation upon which to prepare military forces.

### **3.2 Government Defence Priorities and Assessments of Global Military Developments**

Like other armed forces, the CF must prepare for the future based on assessments of potential opponents and possible theatres of operations. To focus military preparations, it is essential for civilian decision-makers to provide guidance to defence planners on its geographical priorities in terms of possible adversaries, preferred allies and potential operating environments. This guidance must consider the character of military developments in the various regions of the world – especially in regions where the government wishes to be more engaged – as well as the requirements stemming from existing commitments and expectations of allies in shaping Canadian military preparations. Given the size of Canada's armed forces, discussions between civilian decision-makers and their military advisors must also be based on a pragmatic recognition that military preparations cannot possibly be undertaken for every conceivable military challenge in every region of the world. There needs to be a clear sense of priority and a common understanding of what missions and level of effort will be expected of Canadian military contributions in the context of the specific, sometimes unique, military circumstances associated with the different regions of the world.

Military developments tend to vary from region to region around the world. The historical experience, geography, political structures, levels of economic development and technological sophistication of regional actors *inter alia* combine to imbue regional military dynamics with their unique features.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, these features largely determine the potential for and character of possible regional conflicts and military challenges. Understanding regional military dynamics requires detailed and ongoing study of contemporary defence developments in a region, continual examination of the specific plans and defence programs of regional actors and, by extension, an analysis of potential conflicts and military challenges that may emerge from regional military circumstances.<sup>22</sup> Thus, governments ought to draw upon the expertise of their military advisors

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<sup>21</sup> For an overview of the variation in regional and continental armed conflict see, Jeremy Black, *War and the World. Military Power and the Fate of Continents, 1450-2000* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998). See also the path-breaking William H. MacNeil, *The Pursuit of Power, Technology, Armed Force, and Society since AD 1000* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982).

<sup>22</sup> When looking at trends in global military developments and the potential conflicts that may result, one must avoid making assessments based on a simple dichotomy – or as Hew Strachan calls it “binary vision” – between interstate and intrastate war, which at times has also been categorized as regular or irregular warfare. See the trenchant argument against this dichotomous view of modern conflict in Colin M. Fleming, “New or Old Wars? Debating a Clausewitzian Future,” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 32, 2 (April 2009), 213-41. Also see Hew Strachan, “Strategy and the Limitation of War,” *Survival* 50, 1 (Feb.-Mar. 2008), pp. 35-42, 47-50; idem. “The Strategic Gap in British Defence Policy,” *Survival* 51, 4 (Aug.-Sept. 2009), p. 58; Colin S. Gray, *Categorical Confusion? The Strategic Implications of Recognizing Challenges either as Irregular or Traditional*. Strategic Studies Institute Monograph (Carlisle Barracks, PA: US Army

and civilian defence analysts when formulating strategic policy in response to global military developments. In seeking the views of defence experts on particular regional military dynamics, governments should also consider what conflict might look like should it occur in a specific region and ask what the implications would be for military preparations should countries find themselves drawn into a future crisis or conflict.<sup>23</sup> This type of analysis is necessary for governments to make informed decisions about their defence priorities.

To illustrate the point about the impact of regional military developments in generating unique military challenges, two regional examples are briefly discussed below: the South China Sea; and Central America and the Caribbean (see Annex A for a more detailed examination). Recent tensions in the South China Sea have convinced some observers that strained relations among regional actors could someday trigger a conflict.<sup>24</sup> Even in the absence of actual hostilities, there will be an anxious and competitive military situation among the various actors in the region over the near term and likely beyond.<sup>25</sup> Military planners cannot ignore these tensions and, by extension, the possibility of an interstate conflict in the South China Sea involving China and other regional states that might ultimately draw in US armed forces. Given the “geography” of the South China Sea and the military procurement of regional states, it is most probable that a conflict there would put a premium on high readiness air and sea assets. Canadian decision-makers must not only think through the implications of this type of military contingency with its potential for high intensity combat but also determine what role, if any, the Canadian military would perform in the event of such a conflict.

In contrast, military and security developments in Central America and the Caribbean look very different than the military situation in the South China Sea.<sup>26</sup> Traditional security issues

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War College, 2012); and Michael L. Roi, “The strategy gap: contemporary civil-military relations and the use of military power,” in *Routledge Handbook of Diplomacy and Statecraft*. Edited by B.J.C. McKercher (London: Routledge, 2011), pp. 376-387.

<sup>23</sup> Some observers might cavil at the emphasis on armed conflict in this report as a driver of military preparations. A distinction must be made between analysing the potential for and characteristics of regional conflicts for defence planning purposes and assuming that they are inevitable. As Colin Gray points out, “we dare not rest our defense planning on hope. Although we should not plan against a worst-case scenario, neither should we plan for the best case. While we do not want to encourage hostility, some risk of military over-preparation is prudent and much better than a gamble on under-preparation.” Colin S. Gray, “The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Security Environment and the Future of War,” *Parameters* 38, 4 (Winter 2008-09), p. 15.

<sup>24</sup> For good overviews of regional tensions and the potential paths to and drivers of conflict in the South China Sea, see Peter Dutton, “Three Disputes and Three Objectives. China and the South China,” *Naval War College Review* 64, 4 (Autumn 2011), 42-67; and Bonnie S. Glaser, “Armed Clash in the South China Sea,” Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) Contingency Planning Memorandum No. 14, April 2012; and International Crisis Group (ICG), “Stirring Up the South China Sea (II): Regional Responses,” Crisis Group Asia Report #229, 24 July 2012.

<sup>25</sup> The idea of a competitive security situation is linked to another concept from the literature on International Relations: the “security dilemma,” which arises when a state’s efforts to increase its own sense of security causes others to feel less secure because of the uncertainty about that state’s intentions. See Robert Jervis, “Dilemmas about Security Dilemmas,” *Security Studies* 20, 3 (Jul.-Sept. 2011), 416-23; and idem. “Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma,” *World Politics* 30, 2 (Jan. 1978), 167-214.

<sup>26</sup> For an overview of the myriad security and development challenges in Central America and the Caribbean basin, see Stephen J. Randall, “Canada’s National Security Challenges in the Caribbean and Latin America.” Paper # 7 for the Canadian International Council (CIC) Foreign Policy for Canada’s Tomorrow (CIC, April 2010); Michael Shifter, “Countering Criminal Violence in Central America.” Council on Foreign Relations Special Report # 64 (Center for Preventive Action, April 2012); Phil

associated with interstate tensions are less of concern there than problems arising from violent crime, narcotics trafficking, corruption and weak governance. Drug cartels and other criminal organizations help to fuel the levels of violent crime in the region. These organizations vary in their level of operational effectiveness and military capabilities. One of the most dangerous criminal organizations is the group Los Zetas, which possesses a broad range of lethal systems and sophisticated communication equipment.<sup>27</sup> The capabilities of organizations like the Zetas would have to be considered in evaluating potential military contributions or involvement in capacity-building efforts in the region. Unlike the military preparations required for involvement in the South China Sea, many of the skills acquired through combat experience in Afghanistan and the capabilities developed to deal with the Taliban insurgency could be useful in dealing with the threat posed by organizations like Los Zetas.

This brief discussion about military developments in the South China Sea and Central America should not be understood to imply that the Government of Canada's defence preparations must be dictated by regional military circumstances. Ottawa may choose to become more active in a specific region, including involvement in regional defence and security affairs, through other means than military ones. The core argument is that, once the government identifies a specific region as a priority and intends to deploy CF assets as part of its regional engagement, the preparation of military capabilities must take into consideration regional military developments. In other words, the CF must be ready for the potential military contingencies associated with a particular region, which reflect the military capabilities and intentions of regional actors. These preparations must also be based on the specific roles the government expects the Canadian military to perform. Consider, for instance, the issue of Canadian contributions to future expeditionary operations. The government faces choices that range from robust roles designed to undertake a broad spectrum of tasks and missions to more limited participation focused on niche filling, 'plug and play' efforts as part of a coalition. In deciding on when to contribute, how and with what type of forces, the government will need to take into consideration potential coalition members and the probable roles assumed by other national armed forces. Ultimately, the government's preferred approach to expeditionary operations will determine a set of readiness objectives to be achieved through military preparations. It may also indicate current capability deficiencies that need to be addressed through future investment and acquisition plans.

### 3.3 Strategic Policy and Force Posture

The above discussion underscores the requirement for a close and enduring connection between the government's strategic policy, the force posture of the military and the preparation of military capabilities. Strategic policy articulates the defence expectations of the government, ideally

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Williams and Vanda Felbab-Brown, "Drug Trafficking, Violence and Instability," Strategic Studies Institute (SSI) Monograph (Carlisle Barracks, PA: US Army War College, 2012); and Hal Brands, "Crime, Violence and the Crisis in Guatemala: A Case Study in the Erosion of the State," SSI Report (Carlisle Barracks, PA: US Army War College, 2010).

<sup>27</sup> For a detailed discussion of the operational capabilities of groups like Los Zetas, see Lisa J. Campbell, "Los Zetas: operational assessment," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 21, 1 (Mar. 2010), 55-80; Pamela L. Bunker, Lisa J. Campbell and Robert J. Bunker, "Torture, beheadings, and narcocultos," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 21, 1 (Mar. 2010), 145-78; Max Manwaring, "Security, Stability and Sovereignty Challenges of Politicized Gangs and Insurgents in the Americas," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 22, 5 (Dec. 2011), 860-89; and Robert J. Bunker, "Strategic Threat: Narcos and Narcotics Overview," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 21, 1 (Mar. 2010), 8-29.

expressed in clear and achievable policy objectives that provide direction on the geographical scope of defence preparations (for instance, the balance between a continental and an expeditionary focus), preferred allies and the type of missions to be undertaken, including some indication of the size and composition of the effort to be made. Based on this strategic policy direction, senior defence officials and military leaders construct an appropriate force posture, which allocates resources and sets the readiness targets for the service commanders to prepare their forces to carry out their expected missions and tasks. The development of strategic policy and force posture direction necessitates ongoing dialogue between civil decision-makers and their military advisers to ensure the coherence between the government's defence priorities and the preparation of military capabilities. Decision-makers and their military advisers must be able to interact, as Colin Gray puts it, "in the no man's land where politics/policy and military power meet" – the strategy bridge where national security decisions about the use of military power for political purposes are made.<sup>28</sup> Strategic policy development and force posture analysis comprise a major part of this bridging function. One may also think of them as two sides of the same coin, providing the strategic rationale for the defence investments of the government and the mechanism to direct resource allocations in step with government policy objectives.

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<sup>28</sup> Colin S. Gray, *Schools for Strategy: Teaching Strategy for 21st Century Conflict* (Carlisle: US Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, November 2009), p. 32; idem. *Modern Strategy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 17; Hew Strachan, "Making Strategy: Civil-Military Relations after Iraq," *Survival* 48, 3 (Autumn 2006), p. 61; and Antulio J. Echevarria II, *Toward an American Way of War* (Carlisle: US Army War College, Strategic Studies, March 2004), p. 16.

## 4 Conclusion

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*Most Defence White Papers start with an essay on the future strategic environment and end with a shopping list of capabilities. The test of a successful white paper is what comes in between. There needs to be a bridge between the essay and the shopping list—an argument to establish that the capabilities on the shopping list really provide the most cost-effective way to manage the risks inherent in the strategic environment that the essay has described.*

— Hugh White<sup>29</sup>

Starting in the 1990s, Australian defence planners introduced the concept of “strategic interests” to help bridge the gap between their assessment of the future strategic environment and, what White calls, “the shopping list” of defence capabilities.<sup>30</sup> Since then, Australian planners have analyzed Australia’s defence requirements based on Australia’s strategic interests, which provide a foundation for long-term planning by identifying objectives that “remain valid even if systemic change in the international order brings new, different and greater threats.”<sup>31</sup> As White explains,

Today security is properly conceived quite broadly, covering many kinds of threat including economic, environmental, criminal and natural hazards. Many of these however have little or nothing to do with armed force, so to get at the interests that should drive defence policy we need to define a still narrower category: a subset of security interests that we can properly call *strategic interests*. These are the interests which relate to the risk of conventional military threats against Australia, and which do so sufficiently directly that we might want to use armed force to protect them. Strategic interests are therefore those elements of the international order that affect, directly or indirectly, the likelihood or seriousness of an attack against us. They reflect the ways that our vulnerability to attack might be increased or decreased by changes to the international system, the distribution of power and influence, and the balances of military capabilities.<sup>32</sup>

White is careful to add that this narrow conception of interests does not imply that the only purposes for which armed force might be used relate solely to the risk of conventional attack. Countries may choose to use armed force to protect wider security interests or national interests, if they judge such force might be effective and are willing to assume the costs. This limited

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<sup>29</sup> Hugh White, “A Wobbly Bridge: Strategic Interests and Objectives in *Force 2030*,” *Security Challenges* 5, 2 (Winter 2009), p. 21 (emphasis in original). White is a Professor of Strategic Studies and head of the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre at the Australian National University. He was the former Deputy Secretary for Strategy in the Australian Department of Defence, 1995-2000.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21. For explanation of the new Australian approach, see Hugh White, “Strategic Interests in Australian Defence Policy: Some Historical and Methodological Reflections,” *Security Challenges* 4, 2 (Winter 2008), p. 66. See also the path-breaking document, Department of Defence (Australia), *Australia’s Strategic Policy* (Commonwealth of Australia, 1997).

<sup>31</sup> White, “Strategic Interests in Australian Defence Policy,” p. 66.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 66.

definition implies only that “the core purpose of armed force remains responding to the risk of military attack.” White further asserts that: “Working out what kind of forces we need for that purpose thus remains the key task of defence planning, and deciding what we would want our armed forces to be able to do to manage the risk of direct attack thus remains the central problem in defence planning.”<sup>33</sup>

Like Australia, Canada has long linked its defence policy with assessments of the strategic environment.<sup>34</sup> Canadian defence policy statements almost always include judgments about the strategic environment – sometimes called the security or international environment – that generally describe the security and defence trends of concern to the government.<sup>35</sup> These assessments of the strategic environment frequently contain historical reflections on past policy and national traditions as well as descriptions or “outlooks” of the current and future international security situation. Similarly, Canadian defence policy has sometimes sought to establish defence priorities in what might be called a hierarchical framework that reflects a concentric circle concept of Canadian defence imperatives similar to the Australian usage of term strategic interests.<sup>36</sup> The concentric circle concept is divided into inner, secondary and outer circles. In terms of Canadian defence priorities, the inner circle is Canada’s territory and air and maritime approaches. North American continental defence can be considered secondary but almost on an equal footing as the defence of Canada. The outer circle represents the contributions to international security. These circles are both geographical and conceptual implying a descending scale of priority as one moves from the inner circle to the outer one.

For the past seventy years, in fact, Canadian defence policy has been based on the assumption that the Canadian Forces must fulfil three critical roles or what might be called strategic level defence tasks: defend Canada against external threat; defend North America in cooperation with the United States; and make international contributions to promote global peace and security. Through great variations in the global strategic environment of the Second World War, the long years of the East-West confrontation and the post-Cold War period, most Canadian politicians

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<sup>33</sup> See White, “Strategic Interests in Australian Defence Policy,” footnote #3.

<sup>34</sup> It is interesting to note that, as early as 1990, Roy Rempel identified the need for Canadian defence policy to be based on a more precise concept of national objectives, a clearer assessment of Canadian security interests and the type of force posture necessary to protect those interests. See Roy Rempel, “The Need for a Canadian Security Policy,” *Canadian Defence Quarterly* 19, 5 (April 1990), 38-42. Rempel’s concept of security policy was, in many ways, similar to the Australian concept of Strategic Policy.

<sup>35</sup> A glimpse at Defence Statements going back to 1964 will illustrate this point. There are, of course, different and unique aspects in each of the statements but they all include assessments of strategic environment, particularly looking at the principal threats and challenges. See the Government of Canada, *White Paper on Defence* (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer, 1964), pp. 6-13; idem. *Defence in the 70s. White Paper on Defence* (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer, 1971), pp. 3-15; idem. *Challenge and Commitment. A Defence Policy for Canada* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1987), pp.1-15; idem. *Canadian Defence Policy* (Ottawa: DND, 1992), pp. 2-11; idem. *A Role of Pride and Influence in the World: Defence* (Ottawa: Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, 2005), pp. 1-6; and idem. *Canada First Defence Strategy* (Ottawa: 2008), p. 6.

<sup>36</sup> The concentric circle concept is implied in the current *Canada First Defence Strategy (CFDS)* by the following statement on page 7: “First and foremost, the Canadian Forces must ensure the security of our citizens and help exercise Canada’s sovereignty.” Government of Canada, *CFDS*, p. 7.

and government officials have accepted these tasks as axiomatic. This broad understanding of Canadian defence priorities frequently transcends political party divisions.<sup>37</sup>

Today, the Canadian Forces continue to fulfill these three defence roles, a policy objective set by the Government of Canada in the *CFDS*. But departmental defence planners need more direction – to use the Australian parlance, Canada’s “strategic interests” require further delineation – to ensure that the resources allocated by the Government will deliver military capabilities properly prepared to obtain defence policy objectives. This study has highlighted a hitherto missing element of the Canadian defence planning process: the absence of a mechanism linking government defence priorities, the allocation of resources and the preparation of military capabilities. It concludes that clearly defined strategic policy supported by well-articulated force posture direction can fill this strategic planning gap and supply the necessary bridge between government defence priorities and military preparations.

Preparing the CF for future operational challenges requires prudence. Over the past decade, the CF has acquired much operational experience, ranging from combat to the delivery of humanitarian assistance. This experience has ensured that the CF remains a responsive, deployable and combat-capable force. But Canada’s armed forces must prepare for future crises and conflicts. There are no crystal balls for peering into the future and the further one looks out the foggier it becomes. The future will include elements of continuity with recent operational experience but it will also bring new military challenges in step with the evolving priorities of the Government of Canada. This element of uncertainty about the future security environment underscores the importance of ongoing analysis and assessment of the global military situation in order to ensure forces remain postured to meet planned and new tasks. It also reinforces the requirement for continual dialogue between the civil authorities and their military advisers about this evolving global military situation, especially in regions deemed important by the government. As a result of the current efforts to revise the *CFDS* and develop a new Force Posture Directive, Canadian decision-makers and defence planners have a unique opportunity to bring greater coherence and alignment to strategic policy and defence planning. Articulating a new defence policy statement that sets clear Government’s preferences and priorities, which guides, in turn, the development of a revised Force Posture Directive would likely ensure better use of limited resources and establish the much needed causal chain from national strategic direction to the preparation of CF capabilities.

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<sup>37</sup> The reference to the seventy year period relates to the emergence of the concept of North American defence cooperation associated with the Ogdensburg Agreement, based on the meeting between the Canadian Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King and the American President Franklin D. Roosevelt at Ogdensburg, New York, on 17 August 1940. At Ogdensburg, the two leaders agreed to establish the Permanent Joint Board of Defence (PJBD) with equal members from both countries and a mandate to study common defence problems. In the words of Norman Hillmer and Jack Granatstein, “The Ogdensburg Agreement of 1940 definitively marked Canada’s move from the British to the American sphere of influence. Under the weight of Nazi military victories, military and strategic power had shifted and Canada had shifted with it.” Norman Hillmer and J.L. Granatstein, *Empire to Umpire. Canada and the World to the 1990s* (Toronto: Copp Clark Longman, 1994), p. 161. On Canada’s defence reorientation in 1940, see J.L. Granatstein, *Canada’s War. The Politics of the Mackenzie King Government, 1939-1945* (Toronto: Oxford, 1975), pp. 124-29.

## Annex A Regional Military Developments and Potential Conflict and Military Challenges

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The following analysis expands on the discussion in Section 2 looking at the unique military challenges associated with two particular regions: the South China Sea; and Central America and the Caribbean. These regions have been selected because the Government of Canada has named Asia-Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) as priorities for Canadian engagement, including more involvement by the CF. The point here is not to suggest that the Government of Canada must, for example, make responding to robust military contingencies in the South China Sea a defence priority. But to identify some of the military challenges that must be examined should the CF become more active in the region. This discussion is not meant to be exhaustive in terms of describing the full range of military developments underway in each region. Rather, these examples serve as illustrations of the potential conflicts and military challenges associated with these regions and the implications for preparing military capabilities in response. They also underscore the requirement for more dialogue between civilian decision-makers and their military advisors on the potential roles and possible tasks or missions, if any, that the Government would like the CF to prepare for or, conversely, look to others to fulfil.

### South China Sea<sup>38</sup>

Developments in the South China Sea (SCS) have garnered much media attention lately as a result of tensions between China and its neighbours over issues of sovereignty and the ownership of potential hydrocarbon and other resources in the region.<sup>39</sup> Disagreements between the US and Chinese governments about freedom of navigation in the Sea, notably over the right of US warships to operate in China's two hundred mile exclusive economic zone (EEZ), further exacerbate the situation. Moreover, several of the SCS states seek support from Washington in their dealings with Beijing, driven by their anxieties over the disparity between their own capabilities and China's growing economic and military power. Recent events involving China and other SCS states as well as encounters between Chinese and American forces in the region

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<sup>38</sup> For the purposes of this discussion, the South China Sea is considered to cover the region from the Malacca Strait to the Strait of Taiwan, including the countries of China, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, Brunei, Indonesia and the island of Taiwan.

<sup>39</sup> For good overviews of these disputes, see Peter Dutton, "Three Disputes and Three Objectives. China and the South China Sea," *Naval War College Review* 64, 4 (Autumn 2011), 42-67; and Bonnie S. Glaser, "Armed Clash in the South China Sea," Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) Contingency Planning Memorandum No. 14, April 2012. See also Kyle D. Christensen, "The South China Sea: Its Importance in the Future Maritime Security Environment and China's Claims in the Region," DRDC CORA Technical Memorandum (TM) 2009-035, February 2009; P. Dutton, ed., *Military Activities in the EEZ: A U.S.-China Dialogue on Security and International Law in the Maritime Commons* (Newport: U.S. Naval War College, China Maritime Studies Institute, 2010); International Crisis Group (ICG), "Stirring Up the South China Sea (II): Regional Responses," Crisis Group Asia Report #229, 24 July 2012; and Jane Perlez, "Nations at Impasse over South China Sea, Group Warns," *The New York Times*, 24 July 2012, available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/25/world/asia/nations-at-impasse-over-south-china-sea-group-warns.html>; James Webb, "The South China Sea's Gathering Storm," *The Wall Street Journal*, 20 August 2012, available at: [http://online.wsj.com/article\\_email/SB10000872396390444184704577587483914661256-1MyQjAxMTAyMDIwMDAyODA3Wj.html](http://online.wsj.com/article_email/SB10000872396390444184704577587483914661256-1MyQjAxMTAyMDIwMDAyODA3Wj.html).

illustrate how a conflict could occur through escalation, deliberate or calculated decisions and, possibly, by miscalculation.<sup>40</sup> While there are no indications of imminent conflict and all the states have repeatedly expressed a desire for peaceful resolution of outstanding disputes, military planners cannot ignore the very real potential of conflict erupting in the South China Sea in the future.<sup>41</sup> The concluding paragraph of the most recent International Crisis Group report on the South China Sea summarizes well the potential for conflict:

The failure to reduce the risks of conflict, combined with the internal economic and political factors that are pushing claimants toward more assertive behaviour, shows that trends in the South China Sea are moving in the wrong direction. The risk of escalation is high, and as pressure in the region threatens to boil over, claimants would benefit from taking concrete steps toward the joint management of hydrocarbon and fishing resources, as well as toward reaching a common ground on the development of a mechanism to mitigate or de-escalate incidents, even if they cannot agree on an overall approach to dispute resolution. In the absence of such a mechanism, tensions in the South China Sea could all too easily be driven to irreversible levels.<sup>42</sup>

Even if a war between China and one or more of its SCS neighbours does not occur, nor a major violent clash between US and Chinese forces, there will be an anxious and competitive military situation among the various actors in the region over the near term and likely beyond.<sup>43</sup> China's military modernization, as a recent report of the US Congressional Research Service argues, requires "the United States or other countries to maintain a competitive presence in the region with naval and other forces that are viewed by observers in the Pacific as capable of effectively countering China's forces."<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Over the past decade, there have been several tense situations involving Chinese and US forces such as the incident in 2009 when Chinese vessels "shadowed" and attempted to interfere with the American surveillance ship USNS *Impeccable*. See BBC News Report, "China hits out at US on navy row," 10 March 2009, available at: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/7934138.stm>; CNN Report, "Pentagon says Chinese vessels harassed U.S. ship," 9 March 2009, available at: [http://articles.cnn.com/2009-03-09/politics/us.navy.china\\_1\\_chinese-ships-chinese-vessels-chinese-media?\\_s=PM:POLITICS](http://articles.cnn.com/2009-03-09/politics/us.navy.china_1_chinese-ships-chinese-vessels-chinese-media?_s=PM:POLITICS); Welt Online Report, "China-U.S. dispute called worst in 8 years," 10 March 2009, available at: <http://www.welt.de/english-news/article3353531/China-U-S-dispute-called-worst-in-8-years.html>. There is even video taken from the US ship on Youtube under the title "USNS Impeccable Harassed by Chinese Vessels," available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hQvQjwAE4w4>.

<sup>41</sup> For a discussion of the potential paths to and drivers of conflict in the South China Sea, see ICG, "Stirring Up the South China Sea (II): Regional Responses," pp. 13-21; and Glaser, "Armed Clash in the South China Sea," pp. 1-3.

<sup>42</sup> ICG, "Stirring Up the South China Sea (II): Regional Responses," p. 34.

<sup>43</sup> The idea of a competitive security situation is linked to another concept from the literature on International Relations: the "security dilemma," which arises when a state's efforts to increase its own sense of security causes others to feel less secure because of the uncertainty about that state's intentions. See Robert Jervis, "Dilemmas about Security Dilemmas," *Security Studies* 20, 3 (Jul.-Sept. 2011), 416-23; and idem. "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma," *World Politics* 30, 2 (Jan. 1978), 167-214.

<sup>44</sup> Ronald O'Rourke, "China Naval Modernization: Implications for U.S. Navy Capabilities—Background and Issues for Congress," Congressional Research Service (CRS) Report # RL33153, 23 Mar. 2012, p. 6. The CRS report is one of the best unclassified assessments of China's military modernization. Also see Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) Annual Report to Congress, *Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2011*. Ref. 1-4AE81FF, 6 May 2011; M. Taylor Fravel and Evan

While China's military modernization has drawn most of the attention of western military analysts, other SCS states have been building up their militaries in step with their rising Gross Domestic Products (GDPs). The pace of defence spending growth among other SCS states has been fairly modest, indicating that China's rise has not triggered an alarmist response. As one study notes, this growth is consistent with a return to the spending levels of the period before the Asian financial crisis.<sup>45</sup> That said, SCS states such as Vietnam and Malaysia have certainly been investing in their air and naval forces, acquiring among other things Sukhoi (Su)-30 fighter aircraft, rotary-wing gunships and kilo-class submarines. The Philippines too increased its spending on air and naval forces, and the government has been discussing with Washington the potential purchase of F-16 fighters.<sup>46</sup> Singapore also continues to modernize its military and has maintained annual defence spending at an average of four to five percent since the mid-1990s.<sup>47</sup>

In addition to the response of SCS states to China's rising power, Washington has been taking steps to deal with Chinese military modernization, including a rebalancing of defence procurement priorities and a shift of American combat power increasingly towards Asia-Pacific. US military thinkers have also begun to explore a new operational concept called "Air-Sea Battle" to offset China's so-called anti-access / area denial (A2/AD) capabilities – that is to say, equipment and weapons systems aimed at preventing US armed forces from projecting power into the South China Sea and elsewhere, which includes among others a growing number of submarines, anti-ship cruise missiles, land-based anti-ship ballistic missiles, as well as anti-satellite and cyber-attack capabilities.<sup>48</sup> Senior US military officials have stated publicly that they are "agnostic" about the specific regions of the world where they intend to maintain access but clearly the Straits of Malacca and Hormuz remain uppermost in their minds.<sup>49</sup> General Norton A. Schwartz, the former Chief of the United States Air Force (USAF), and Admiral Jonathan W. Greenert, the current US Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), have been remarkably frank in public discourse about what the Air-Sea Battle concept entails. The "ultimate goal" of the Air-Sea battle, General Schwartz told an audience at the Brookings Institution, "is interoperable air and naval forces that can execute networked, integrated attacks-in-depth to disrupt, destroy, and defeat enemy anti-access area denial capabilities and in turn sustaining the deployment of U.S. joint

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S. Medeiros, "China's Search for Assured Retaliation. The Evolution of Chinese Nuclear Strategy and Force Structure," *International Security* 35, 2 (Fall 2010), 48-87;

<sup>45</sup> Evan S. Medeiros, "The New Security Drama in East Asia. The Responses of U.S. Allies and Security Partners to China's Rise," *Naval War College Review* 62, 4 (Autumn 2009), p. 40.

<sup>46</sup> Medeiros, "The New Security Drama in East Asia," pp. 43-46; Evan S. Medeiros, Keith Crane, Eric Heginbotham, Norman D. Levin, Julia F. Lowell, Angel Rabasa and Somi Seong, *Pacific Currents: The Responses of U.S. Allies and Security Partners in East Asia to China's Rise* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2008); and ICG, "Stirring Up the South China Sea (II): Regional Responses," pp. 18-20.

<sup>47</sup> Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment – Southeast Asia, "Defence Budget Overview – Singapore," 30 March 2012, Jane's Online at <https://janes.ihs.com>.

<sup>48</sup> The most recent strategic guidance to the US armed forces states that one of the primary missions is to "project power despite Anti-Access / Area Denial Challenges." See Department of Defense, "Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Defense," Washington, January 2012, p. 4. It is interesting to note that China and Iran are the two countries named in this strategic guidance document as acquiring A2/AD means to counter US power projection capabilities.

<sup>49</sup> See the transcripts of a public discussion on Air-Sea Battle that took place at the Brookings Institution on 16 May 2012, Brookings Institution Transcript, "Air-Sea Battle Doctrine: A Discussion with the Chief of Staff of the Air Force and Chief of Naval Operations, Wednesday May 16, 2012." Alexandria, VA, available at: <http://www.brookings.edu/events/2012/05/16-air-sea-doctrine>.

forces.”<sup>50</sup> In an article in *The American Interest*, Schwartz and Greenert have further outlined what integrated attacks-in-depth to disrupt, destroy and defeat an enemy will comprise. Efforts to disrupt, for example, will involve attacks on an enemy’s intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) as well as command and control systems (C2), including offensive cyber and anti-satellite operations. Strikes will also be launched to “destroy” or neutralize an enemy’s weapon delivery platforms such as surface combatants, submarines, aircraft and missile launchers.<sup>51</sup> By having the wherewithal to disrupt and destroy an enemy’s A2/AD capabilities, US forces will, in effect, have the ability to “defeat” efforts to prevent them from accessing vital regions of the world. Certainly, one of the goals of the Air-Sea Battle concept is to convince potential adversaries that they cannot prevent US power projection into their region and thus deter or dissuade provocative behaviour before it escalates to the point of conflict.

Even if American aspirations for Air-Sea Battle fail to be fully realized, it is clear that a conflict in the South China Sea involving US and Chinese forces would likely involve high intensity conventional air and sea combat, even if the duration is short-lived. This possibility cannot be ignored by Canadian military planners. CF capabilities operating in Asia-Pacific in the future must understand the potential for high intensity combat and determine what role, if any, they would perform in the event of such a conflict. To be sure, there have been voices from the US Army pushing back against the Air-Sea Battle concept with its predominant focus on aerospace and naval capabilities.<sup>52</sup> But given the “geography” of the South China Sea and the military procurement of SCS states, it is most probable that a conflict there would but a premium on high readiness air and sea assets.

## Central America and the Caribbean

The military and security situation in Central America and the Caribbean looks very different than developments in the South China Sea.<sup>53</sup> As one recent Canadian report remarked, traditional

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<sup>50</sup> Brookings Institution Transcript, “Air-Sea Battle Doctrine,” p. 10.

<sup>51</sup> General Norton A. Schwartz and Admiral Jonathan W. Greenert, “Air-Sea Battle. Promoting Stability in an Era of Uncertainty,” *The American Interest*, 20 February 2012, available at: <http://www.the-american-interest.com/article.cfm?piece=1212>. See also O’Rourke, “China Naval Modernization,” Appendix B; Jose Carreno, Thomas Culora, George Caldorisi and Thomas Hone, “What’s New about the AirSea Battle Concept?” *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 136, 8 (Aug. 2010), 52-59; and Philip S. Davidson, Samuel J. Papara and Joseph F. Finn, “Fighting the Future AirSea Battle,” *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 138, 1 (Jan. 2012), 20-24.

<sup>52</sup> National Defense Editorial, “Army Pushing Back on ‘Air-Sea Battle’ Narrative,” *National Defense* 96, 698 (Jan 2012), p. 6; and Douglas MacGregor and Young J. Kim, “Air-Sea Battle: Something’s Missing. Without ground forces, the U.S. cannot counter Chinese aggression,” *Armed Forces Journal* (April 2012), 12-15, 32. The two service project leads for the Air-Sea Battle concept – Capt. Philip Dupree (USN) and Col. Jordan Thomas (USAF) – responded to critics. See Philip Dupree and Jordan Thomas, “Air-Sea Battle: Clearing the fog,” *Armed Forces Journal* (June 2012), 10-12, 30.

<sup>53</sup> For an overview of the myriad security and development challenges in Central America and the Caribbean basin, see Stephen J. Randall, “Canada’s National Security Challenges in the Caribbean and Latin America.” Paper # 7 for the Canadian International Council (CIC) Foreign Policy for Canada’s Tomorrow (CIC, April 2010); Michael Shifter, “Countering Criminal Violence in Central America.” Council on Foreign Relations Special Report # 64 (Center for Preventive Action, April 2012); Phil Williams and Vanda Felbab-Brown, “Drug Trafficking, Violence and Instability,” Strategic Studies Institute (SSI) Monograph (Carlisle Barracks, PA: US Army War College, 2012); Hal Brands, “Crime, Violence and the Crisis in Guatemala: A Case Study in the Erosion of the State,” SSI Report (Carlisle

security issues associated with interstate tensions are less of concern there than problems arising from violent crime, narcotics trafficking, corruption and weak governance.<sup>54</sup> At the same time, extra-hemispheric powers such as China, Russia and Iran continue to maintain and enhance their relationships with Central and South American countries.<sup>55</sup> Their involvement in hemispheric affairs could expand in the future and, potentially, increase tensions with the US, intensifying interstate competition between hemispheric states and external actors. At present, there appears to be a consensus among defence and security analysts that interstate conflict involving major regional or external powers remains a low probability threat in the current security environment in Central America and the Caribbean. While the risks of interstate conflict may be low, personal safety remains a concern for many people who live in Central American and Caribbean countries. These countries and their cities are dangerous places with some of the highest per capita murder rates in world, as Figures 1 and 2 below show.

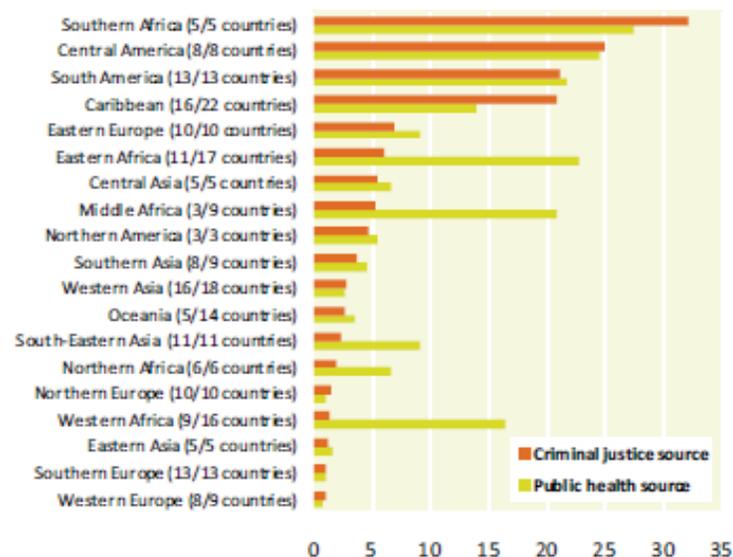


Figure 1: 2010 Murder Rates per 100,000 inhabitants by sub-region.<sup>56</sup>

Barracks, PA: US Army War College, 2010); R Evan Ellis, *China-Latin America Military Engagement: Good Will, Good Business, and Strategic Position*, SSI Monograph (Barracks, PA: US Army War College, 2011); Clare Ribando Seelke, *Trafficking in Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Congressional Research Service (CRS) Report # RL3320, 9 September 2011); Clare Ribando Seelke, Liana Sun Wyler and June S. Beittel, “Latin America and the Caribbean: Illicit Drug Trafficking and U.S. Counterdrug Programs,” CRS Report # R41215, 30 April 2010.

<sup>54</sup> Randall, “Canada’s National Security Challenges in the Caribbean and Latin America,” pp. 5-6.

<sup>55</sup> It is important not to exaggerate the degree of Chinese influence in Latin America, and to make a distinction between China’s economic and diplomatic involvement and its military engagement in the region. As an American scholar has commented, “Latin American and Caribbean leaders, even avowedly anti-U.S. ones, do not so much wish to replace Washington with Beijing – in the words of Castro, to replace one form of imperialism with another – as to have another source of income and influence.” June Teufel Dreyer, “From China With Love: P.R.C. Overtures in Latin America,” *Brown Journal of World Affairs* 12, 2 (Winter/Spring 2006), p. 96.

<sup>56</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Global Study on Homicide 2011* (UNODC, 2011), p. 21.

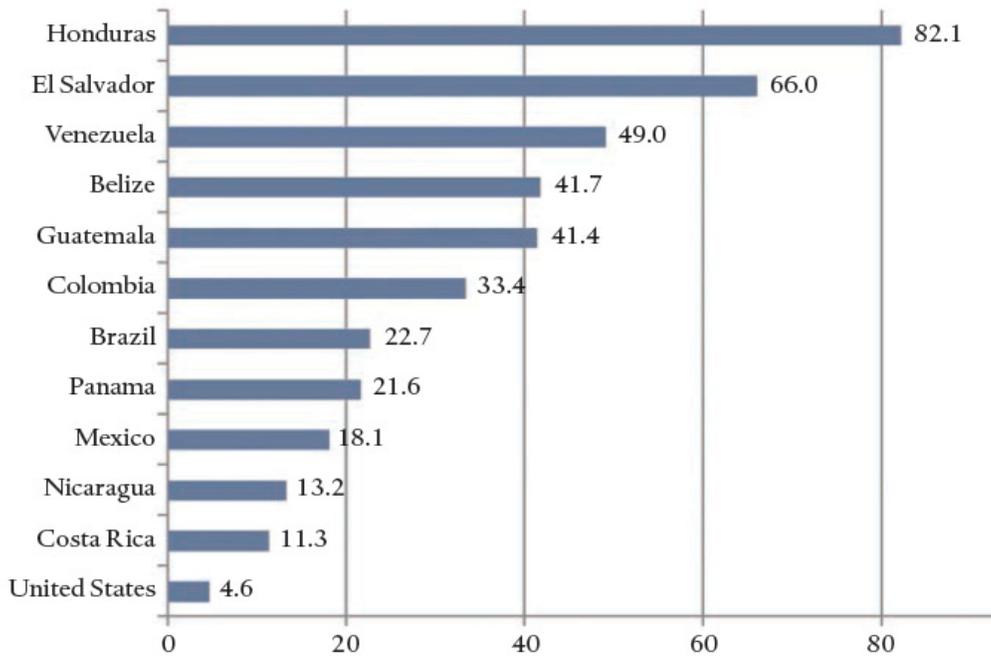


Figure 2: 2010 Murder Rates per 100,000 inhabitants.<sup>57</sup>

As these statistics indicate, Central America is a very dangerous place for many of its citizens. In 2010, Honduras had a murder rate nearly eighteen times greater than the US, while Mexico’s homicide rate was four times larger than the American one. The drug corridor that runs from Colombia to Mexico and includes the Caribbean is one of the primary drivers of the levels of violent crime in the region. Guatemala and Mexico, in particular, have witnessed a sharp increase in drug-related violence over the past few years as local cartels wage war against one another and against their respective governments for control of territory and trade routes. These drug cartels and criminal organizations vary in their level of operational effectiveness and military capabilities. At the upper end of the scale is the group Los Zetas, whose recruits include former members of the Mexican and Guatemalan special forces.<sup>58</sup> The Zetas organization has many of the attributes of well-organized armed groups, militias or irregular forces, including a hierarchical command structure and sub-units (cells) that carry out operational and intelligence functions. Like many insurgent or terrorist organizations, the Zetas are also thought to comprise both core and extended memberships. The core may number somewhere between 100 to 350 members and

<sup>57</sup> Shifter, “Countering Criminal Violence in Central America,” p. 10.

<sup>58</sup> For a detailed discussion of the operational capabilities of groups like Los Zetas, see Lisa J. Campbell, “Los Zetas: operational assessment,” *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 21, 1 (Mar. 2010), 55-80; Pamela L. Bunker, Lisa J. Campbell and Robert J. Bunker, “Torture, beheadings, and narcocultos,” *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 21, 1 (Mar. 2010), 145-78; Man Manwaring, “Security, Stability and Sovereignty Challenges of Politicized Gangs and Insurgents in the Americas,” *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 22, 5 (Dec. 2011), 860-89; and Robert J. Bunker, “Strategic Threat: Narcos and Narcotics Overview,” *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 21, 1 (Mar. 2010), 8-29.

the extended membership may amount to several thousands.<sup>59</sup> In addition, the Zetas maintain links and frequently cooperate with various mafias and street gangs across the region.

The Zetas have an impressive range of weapons, equipment and communication systems and, unlike many insurgent groups, have abundant financial resources to outfit their members. Raids on Zetas' weapon caches and encounters with their fighters have revealed a notable arsenal of small arms and automatic weapons, rocket launchers and anti-tank rockets, RPG-7s, anti-aircraft guns, surface-to-air missiles, anti-personnel mines, military grade explosives, armoured vehicles, helicopters, night vision devices, armoured vests and Kevlar ballistic helmets, high frequency radios with encryption coding and wiretapping equipment.<sup>60</sup> Their tactics include assassinations, ambushes, mass killings, street firefights that involve coordinated attacks by small units and use of high-caliber weapons and brutal methods of torture and murder (beheadings / mutilation). They have also been known to conduct cyber attacks against rival organizations and journalists.<sup>61</sup>

Not all of the criminal organizations operating in Central America have the level of operational effectiveness or possess the range of lethal equipment of Los Zetas. Nevertheless, it is the capabilities of organizations like the Zetas that will have to be considered in evaluating potential military contributions or involvement in the region. Over the past few years, Canada has increased the commitment of military resources in Central America and the Caribbean but this increment has been, in the words of a recent study, "modest" with a focus on capacity-building, including police, legal and peace support training, as well as technical assistance.<sup>62</sup> Should the Government of Canada wish to expand capacity-building efforts in the region, including the use of CF capabilities such as the deployment of Canadian Army (CA) and RCAF assets, the threat posed by groups like the Zetas would have to be factored into discussions about military preparations.

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<sup>59</sup> Campbell, "Los Zetas: operational assessment," p. 63.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., pp. 63-65.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p. 68.

<sup>62</sup> Randall, "Canada's National Security Challenges in the Caribbean and Latin America," pp. 8-9.

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## List of symbols/abbreviations/acronyms/initialisms

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A2/AD	Anti-Access / Area Denial
ADM	Assistant Deputy Minister
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
C2	Command and Control
CA	Canadian Army
CDS	Chief of the Defence Staff
CF	Canadian Forces
CFDS	Canada First Defence Strategy
CFR	Council on Foreign Relations
CNN	Cable News Network
CNO	Chief of Naval Operations
CORA	Centre for Operational Research and Analysis
CRS	Congressional Research Service
DGISPol	Director-General International Security Policy
DND	Department of National Defence
DRDC	Defence Research & Development Canada
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GES	Global Engagement
HR	High Readiness
ICBM	Intercontinental Ballistic Missile
ICG	International Crisis Group
IRF	Immediate Response Forces
IRU	Immediate Response Unit
ISR	Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
JIATFS	Joint Interagency Task Force South
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
MARV	Manoeuvrable Re-entry Vehicle
MIRV	Multiple Independently-targetable Re-entry Vehicle
MR	Minimal Readiness

NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NORAD	North American Aerospace Defence
NR	Normal Readiness
ORBAT	Order of Battle
PAA	Program Activity Architecture
RCAF	Royal Canadian Air Force
RCN	Royal Canadian Navy
RPG	Rocket-propelled Grenade
SAR	Search and Rescue
SCS	South China Sea
SJS	Strategic Joint Staff
SSBN	Nuclear-powered Ballistic Missile Submarine
SSI	Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
US	United States
USAF	United States Air Force
USN	United States Navy
VCDS	Vice-Chief of the Defence Staff
YFR	Yearly Flying Rate

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Military planners certainly recognize the importance of readiness to the conduct of operations and the execution of tasks. Nevertheless, there continues to be confusion around the usage of terms readiness and force posture. This Technical Memorandum seeks to bring greater clarity to these terms. By doing so, it demonstrates the vital role played by force posture and strategic readiness in linking the government's defence priorities (policy preferences) to the allocation of resources and the production of military capabilities. The first section of the Technical Memorandum examines the existing usages of the terms readiness, force structure and force posture. This discussion seeks to elucidate these terms in order to establish a solid conceptual base from which to explore the function of force posture direction. Section Two looks specifically at the role of force posture direction in bridging the policy preferences of the government with the allocation of resources in defence planning. All governments and their military advisors face difficulties connecting the aims of defence policy to the preparation of military capabilities. Clearly, military forces must be ready to meet the objectives set by their governments. At the same time, the success of their preparations will be determined in part by how well prepared they are for the actual operational situations in which they are deployed. This study explores this interaction between political imperatives and military judgments and highlights the need to develop a force posture as both the strategic rationale for defence priorities and a mechanism to allocate resources within the Department of National Defence (DND). The conclusion suggests that force posture analysis and discussion can also help to facilitate improved dialogue between civil authorities and their military advisors over the preparation and use of military power.

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Readiness, Force Structure, Force Posture, Defence Priorities, Strategic Intelligence, Defence Planning



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