

Chapter 1

OVERVIEW

Humanitarian assistance (HA) is different things to different audiences. It may be confused with peace operations, given the development of crises in Somalia, the Former Republic of Yugoslavia, and Northern Iraq. Although HA operations may be conducted simultaneously with peace operations, they are different in nature and purpose.

This chapter discusses the terminology and types of operations, range of operations, environments of operations, and principles of operations peculiar to HA. United States (US) military forces tasked for HA operations include all active and reserve components of the US Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and, when applicable, the Coast Guard. The objective of these military forces is to execute humanitarian missions when directed by cognizant legal authority.

TERMINOLOGY

HA includes programs conducted to relieve or reduce the results of natural or man-made disasters or other endemic conditions such as human pain, disease, hunger, or privation that might present a serious threat to life or result in great damage or loss of property. HA provided by US forces is limited in scope and duration. The assistance is designed to supplement or complement the efforts of the host nation civil authorities or agencies that may have the primary responsibility for providing HA¹.

Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) are predominantly European national or international, nonprofit citizen's voluntary organizations. They are involved in such diverse activities as education, technical projects, relief, and refugee and development programs. Examples of NGOs include, but are not limited to, religious; peace, disarmament, environmental, development, and human rights groups.

¹Joint Publication 1-02, *DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, 8 September 1993.

Humanitarian Assistance

Private voluntary organizations (PVOs) are private, US-based, nonprofit organizations involved in humanitarian efforts including, but not limited to, relief, development, refugee assistance, environment, public policy, or global education.

International organizations (IOs) are organizations, such as the United Nations (UN) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), with global influence.

Peace operations is the umbrella term that encompasses three types of activities—activities with predominantly diplomatic lead (preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peace building) and two complementary, predominantly military, activities (peacekeeping and peace-enforcement).

Peacekeeping (PK) operations are neutral military or paramilitary operations that are undertaken with the consent of all major belligerents. They are designed to monitor and facilitate implementation of an existing truce and support diplomatic efforts to reach a long-term political settlement.

Peace-enforcement (PE) is the application of military force, or the threat of its use, normally pursuant to international authorization, to compel compliance with generally accepted resolutions or sanctions designed to maintain or restore peace and support diplomatic efforts to reach a long-term political settlement. The primary purpose of PE is the restoration of peace under conditions broadly defined by the international community.

TYPES OF OPERATIONS

A chief purpose of military forces conducting foreign HA operations is to provide a secure environment to allow humanitarian relief efforts to progress. As such, HA missions for US military may cover a broad range of taskings. In every case, the specific requirements placed on US soldiers, sailors, marines, and airmen will be situation-dependent. HA means vastly different things to different people, based on their specific perspective. HA operations can encompass both *reactive* programs, such as disaster relief, and *proactive* programs, such as humanitarian and civic assistance (HCA) or civil support.

DISASTER RELIEF

Disaster relief operations can be conducted across the entire range of military operations and can range from domestic natural disasters to the aftermath of foreign conflicts. HA missions in the area of disaster relief include efforts to mitigate the results of natural or man-made disasters. Examples of disasters include hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, oil spills, famine, and civil conflicts. Potential roles for US forces include the construction of basic sanitation facilities, repair of public

facilities, construction of shelters, provision of food and medical care, and immediate response to relieve suffering, prevent loss of life, and protect property.

REFUGEE ASSISTANCE

Refugee programs are specific programs designed to support the resettlement of refugees and displaced persons. UN classifications of persons in these two categories are important because of certain legal ramifications and sanctions associated with these designations. Department of Defense (DOD), in Joint Publication 1-02, defines these categories. Refugees are civilians who, by reason of real or imagined danger, have left home to seek safety across an international border. The UN definition of *refugee* is similar but specifies the person is “outside his country of origin.” Displaced persons are civilians who are involuntarily outside the natural boundaries of their country. Programs include—

- Administration of camps.
- Care (food, supplies, medical care, and protection).
- Placement (movement or relocation to other countries, camps, and locations).

The UN coordinates international refugee and displaced person programs as directed by the secretary general of the UN.

HUMANITARIAN AND CIVIC ASSISTANCE

HCA is a component of the Nation Assistance Program, under purview of the foreign internal defense and development concept. HCA is normally a long-term proactive program coordinated by regional unified commands. Deployed military units conduct these activities, which include medical, dental, and veterinary care and some local infrastructure construction and repair.

Nation assistance furthers the establishment of an effective local government supporting the goal of crisis prevention. Nation assistance therefore includes those actions that assist in and support legitimate governments of host nations and counter attempts by destabilizing forces from within the affected nation. HCA is governed by Title 10, US Code, Section 401, which states that HCA—

- Must be carried out in conjunction with host nation military and/or civilian personnel.

- Shall complement and may not duplicate any other form of social or economic assistance provided to the host nation by another department or agency of the US.
- May not be provided directly or indirectly to any individual, group, or organization engaged in military or paramilitary activity.
- May not be provided unless the Department of State (DOS) specifically approves such assistance.

CIVIL SUPPORT

Civil support is another long-term effort to assist local governments in domestic support areas such as repairs to infrastructures and actions that enable the existing government to govern. Civil support can also include environmental assistance—restoration, conservation, and protection of the environment. Civil support should not be considered a direct responsibility of HA operations; however, civil support-type activities invariably occur during HA and should be closely monitored to prevent expansion of the originally intended HA operation (see paragraph on *Mission Creep* in Chapter 3).

RANGE OF OPERATIONS

US military forces participate in three basic types of HA operations:

- Those coordinated by the UN.
- Those where the US acts in concert with other coalition forces.
- Those where the US responds unilaterally.

UNITED NATIONS-COORDINATED OPERATIONS

The international process to conduct HA operations has been undergoing a period of rapid and fundamental change associated with the end of the Cold War. The UN has become more actively involved in worldwide HA missions. These include not only UN coordination of certain HA operations but in some cases the commitment of dedicated UN forces to the area of operations (AO).

UN-coordinated operations that involve military forces normally take the form of specifically designated peace operations. However, these operations can also be purely HA operations. In Somalia, for example, the UN agreed to provide security for relief efforts on the part of NGOs and PVOs. This support included the tasking of UN observers to monitor relief operations, making it the first occasion to use military observers for humanitarian relief.

Certain HA operations may begin as a multinational or unilateral US response and later become UN-sanctioned. The UN often experiences significant time delays as the organization works through the process of achieving international consensus. A unilateral or multinational response to a crisis situation may be faster than a parallel UN response.

MULTINATIONAL OPERATIONS

US military operations are often conducted with the armed forces of other nations in pursuit of common objectives. Multinational operations, both those that include combat and those that do not, are conducted within the structure of an alliance or coalition. A coalition is a multinational action outside the bounds of established alliances, usually for single occasions or longer cooperation in a narrow sector of common interest. Multinational operations are likely to occur in large-scale HA operations. The development of clearly defined command relationships for each coalition is an essential ingredient for successful HA operations. The relationship depends on two factors.

- The first factor is the HA mission requirements and the duration of the HA operation.
- The second factor is the political sensitivity exerted by the coalition partners involved in the HA operation.

During Operation Restore Hope, more than 40 countries offered initial assistance to participate in the HA effort. The types of forces, size of personnel commitments, dedication of supplies, and other contributions had to be carefully managed to match the requirements of the mission. US Central Command (USCENTCOM) developed a force data questionnaire and used it to gather information on each country's HA forces. This data was used to plan lift and support requirements and assist in the effective use of the forces once they reached Somalia. In addition, USCENTCOM organized a coalition working group and met frequently to review the current status of nations participating in the HA operation. These two techniques proved essential to managing the diverse contributions of coalition partners.

Based on USCENTCOM staff interviews

Foreign military forces receive guidance from their political leadership on how to interact with other members of the coalition and how to interact with specific agencies. The diverse political goals of contributing nations affect military and nonmilitary coordination and impact the command and control (C²) structure.

Multinational HA operations provide unique and difficult challenges to coordination, which include language translation, cross-cultural sensitivities, and national perspectives. Early detailed planning stresses establishment of essential liaison requirements.

US UNILATERAL OPERATIONS

In specific HA operations, the US Government may direct US military forces to act in concert with other US Government departments without direct involvement of other nations. Such would normally occur in situations where the US decides to act on its own—for expediency or self interest—to rapidly respond to a crisis.

JOINT FORCE OPERATIONS

A *joint force operation* is a military operation in which more than one service participates. Virtually every large-scale HA operation will be a joint force operation organized as a joint task force (JTF). The need for a joint response is based on the complementary nature of US armed forces for actions in the theater of operations.

Each service brings to the HA mission certain unique capabilities such as Air Force airlift, Navy sealift and construction (Seabees), Army civil affairs (CA), and Marine combat service support (CSS), shipboard helicopters, and so forth. The JTF is the central focal point for coordinating all US military actions with other agencies, forces, and nations.

US military forces tasked to participate in a foreign HA operation will be part of a JTF, and, in all likelihood, that JTF will be part of a larger coalition response or multinational task force (MTF). The JTF is discussed in detail in Chapters 3 and 4. An example of a recent JTF to support HA was Operation Able

Manner/Safe Harbor, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, in 1991 and 1992. A multiservice response was required when large numbers of Haitian immigrants were intercepted by US Coast Guard cutters in the Windward Passage and brought to Cuba. The commander of the joint task force (CJTF) was a US Marine Corps brigadier general who directed the joint service operation.

Initially, the USS Tortuga (LSD 46) provided temporary messing, berthing, and medical support for up to 1,000 immigrants. As the JTF came on line, Army CA units, Navy Seabees, and Army engineer units established five holding camps to process and administer the Haitian immigrants. While their legal status was being determined, the JTF continued to provide security, food, medical care, and all aspects of public administration for the camps. (For additional examples of JTF responses, see Appendix A.)

Based on an interview with
a participant of JTF Guantanamo

SINGLE-SERVICE OPERATIONS

Individual services are responsible for training, equipping, and organizing the forces that conduct HA operations. These forces must be capable of operating as individual units, with other services in a joint or multinational environment, or, as is expected in HA operations, within the context of an interagency scenario.

SMALL-UNIT OPERATIONS

Small-unit operations include tasking of individual units to provide tailored or specialized services. Such services, for example, would include tasking company-size medical units to provide emergency medical support in remote areas or short-term detachments of aircraft and personnel to provide quick-reaction transportation capabilities. Small-unit operations may be the

precursor to large-scale HA missions or may be specifically designed to meet limited HA objectives.

MILITARY OPERATIONS OTHER THAN WAR

Military operations other than war (MOOTW) represent a wide range of operations occurring in both domestic and foreign environments and include combat and noncombat operations. Specific operations include, but are not limited to—

- Noncombatant evacuation operations (NEO).
- Strikes and raids.
- Arms control, enforcement of exclusion zones, peacekeeping, and peace enforcement.
- Nation assistance.
- Protection of shipping.
- Humanitarian assistance.

Operations Urgent Fury, Provide Comfort, Restore Hope, and Sea Angel and JTF Andrew are examples of MOOTW. As compared to war, MOOTW are more sensitive to political considerations because of the overriding objective to limit potential hostilities. When conducted in foreign environments, MOOTW support the diplomatic instrument of national power, which highlights the criticality of both the military's supporting role and interagency operations for successful mission accomplishment.

HA operations are often conducted simultaneously with other military missions. In most short-term, foreign HA operations, neutrality is an important aspect. Military forces should be aware that some nonmilitary agencies involved in HA operations, especially non-US agencies, do not see the US military as neutral. However, when they comprehend the tremendous capabilities of the US military, with its unique warfighting and humanitarian abilities, they become more receptive to increased interagency operations.

Peace operations—especially peace-enforcement—goals and objectives may differ from HA goals and objectives both in scope and duration. Attitudes of host nationals or conflict belligerents may vary from helpful cooperation to forceful opposition, depending on whether

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the military force is or is not perceived to be an HA force or a peace operations force. Many peace operations include HA considerations, even when not expressed in the peace operation mandate and mission. HA-type missions that could occur in conjunction with peace operations include—

- Providing food, potable water, shelter, transportation, and engineer support to the resident population.
- Assisting in the delivery of humanitarian aid, especially to isolated communities.
- Providing emergency medical treatment and medical assistance programs for the prevention of disease.
- Providing extraction and evacuation of sick, injured, or wounded civilians.

HA is an important MOOTW mission that the US military is uniquely qualified to plan and execute. Unlike any other single organization, the military has the organizational structure, educated and trained personnel, essential equipment, rapid

worldwide deployability, and ability to operate in austere physical environments.

Examples of MOOTW range from domestic support to combat operations. They include JTF Andrew, Operation Desert Shield, Operation Urgent Fury, and Operation Provide Comfort. MOOTW include a wide range of operations occurring in both domestic and foreign environments, which include both combat and noncombat operations. HA employs military assets to support noncombat objectives as part of MOOTW. Since MOOTW normally occur to support the political/diplomatic instrument, the military may not be in the lead. This highlights the criticality of interagency and NGO and PVO cooperation and coordination for mission success.

Based on input from
the Center for Low-Intensity Conflict

ENVIRONMENTS OF OPERATIONS

The US force commander, in collaboration with other responding organizations, should assess the environment in which US forces will conduct HA operations. The operational environment includes the political situation, physical boundaries, potential threat to forces, global visibility, and media interest climate for HA operations.

Once the operational environment is confirmed, the US force commander determines the types and numbers of forces required to meet the assigned tasking. The environment determines the rules of engagement (ROE) to be used within the AOs. For HA, the more permissive the environment, the more predictable the outcome of the mission. Environments that military forces can expect to encounter in the conduct of HA operations may be permissive, uncertain, or hostile.

PERMISSIVE ENVIRONMENT

A permissive environment is conducive to HA operations. Little or no opposition or resistance to HA forces is expected. A permissive environment is normally associated with pure relief operations following a natural disaster or economic collapse, with assistance provided at the request of the host government. Nonhostile, anti-US interests may attempt to disrupt US military activities. The physical security environment may be permissive; however, other nonthreatening means, such as demonstrations, may be employed to impair credibility or reduce effectiveness of US military activities.

The distinction between HA in a permissive environment and in a hostile environment must be clear. Failure to make this distinction will result in inadequate planning and unrealistic

expectations. HA operations in a permissive environment are characterized by—

- Commonality of purpose for all parties.
- A quantifiable problem, often a single, natural disaster.
- Clear objectives, provision of support until normalcy returns.
- Host nation cooperation.

UNCERTAIN ENVIRONMENT

An uncertain environment is an operational environment in which host government forces, whether opposed to or receptive to operations that a unit intends to conduct, do not have totally effective control of the territory and population in the intended AO.

HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT

Hostile conditions, circumstances, and influences in the operational environment range from civil disorder or terrorist actions to full-scale combat. Forces conducting HA must be prepared for a full range of contingencies. Commanders can employ their forces to ensure the safety of the populace—defend the perimeter, provide escort convoys, screen the local populace, assist in personnel recovery operations, and

so forth. HA operations in a nonpermissive environment are often characterized by—

- Multiple conflicting parties.
- Imminent danger to all parties.
- Relief used as a significant weapon that can be manipulated by combatants for political gain.
- Relief efforts that take on the overtones of CSS.

The more hostile the environment in which HA is conducted, the less predictable the force actions will be toward meeting defined mission objectives. HA forces must be prepared to counter actions by hostile guerrillas attempting to disrupt friendly forces and to counter mass actions by a previously friendly populace. Commanders should not depend on their humanitarian mission to shield them from hostile acts. HA commanders, in conjunction with higher authority, must determine the appropriateness of the use of force. The effects of the environment on humanitarian activities are depicted in Figure 1-1. As the environment becomes progressively more hostile, the corresponding requirement for security increases, while the capability for humanitarian activities, such as food distribution and medical assistance, decreases.

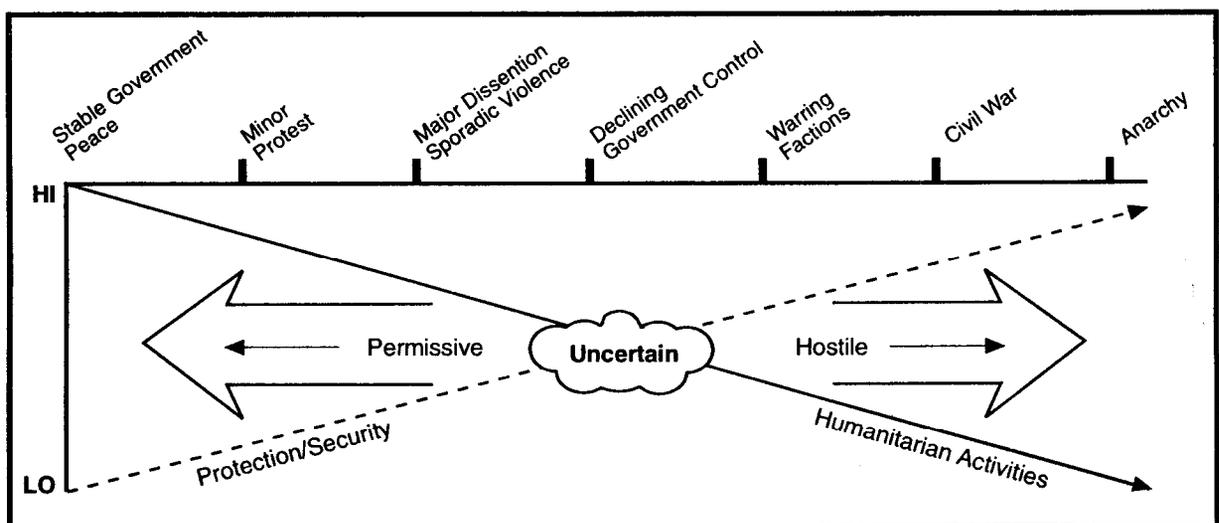


Figure 1-1. Effects of Operational Environment on Humanitarian Activities

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HA commanders, in conjunction with higher authority, must determine the appropriateness of the use of force. An unarmed HA force is acceptable only in a permissive environment. This kind of environment would normally be found only when HA forces are called to respond to a natural disaster, such as in Operation Sea Angel in Bangladesh. In most HA situations, the force is armed. The CJTF must determine the proper level and types of armament, to

include riot control agents (RCA) or cayenne pepper spray (CPS), when applicable.

In a region with diverse ethnic, racial, or clique components, warring factions may be present. Consent of these factions makes relief efforts easier. In the absence of consent, a political or diplomatic decision is made if the situation demands armed intervention as a preliminary to render HA. The risks associated with forcible action have to be anticipated.

PRINCIPLES OF OPERATIONS

The major contributions that the US military provides to any HA operation is a responsible, self-contained force that assists other agencies in accomplishing humanitarian relief. Military forces are normally tasked to provide some sort of short-term response in an HA crisis situation, while civilian agencies supporting the same HA operation have a long-term perspective toward providing aid and assistance. Planners must consider the differing perspectives of assistance providers when coordinating an HA operation.

Military commanders and planners tasked to support HA should consider a few broad and enduring principles to maximize the effectiveness of force employment. Such consideration minimizes situational reactions, improves efficiency, and encourages interagency cooperation when US military forces initiate HA operations.

OBJECTIVE

Direct every military operation toward a clearly defined, decisive, and attainable objective.

To achieve the objective, military commanders and planners should—

- Know that HA operations have different objectives than combat operations. Military units engaged in HA are tasked to supply a level of assets appropriate to the mission. Military units tasked with HA use a level of force appropriate to the mission.
- Know that clarity in HA tasking and the military role in support of HA is essential.
- Establish attainable and realistic HA goals.

- Develop clear HA mission-termination end state standards and ensure that all involved military and civil agencies understand them.
- Inform HA forces of the parameters and terms of reference within which they function.

UNITY OF EFFORT

Seek unity of effort toward every objective.

To attain unity of effort, US military commanders conducting HA operations—

- Support, cooperate with, and take direction from US civil governmental authorities.
- Establish clear lines of authority for HA forces.
- Appreciate political/diplomatic factors affecting the chain of command.
- Anticipate problems in focusing unity of command.

PERSEVERANCE

Prepare for the measured, protracted application of military capabilities to support strategic aims.

Commanders should balance their desire to attain objectives quickly with a sensitivity for long-term objectives. They must be assured of the resources required to preserve and accomplish HA goals. The forces must be prepared to support the assigned HA objectives and provide the necessary resources to accomplish the mission.

SECURITY

Never permit hostile factions to acquire an unexpected advantage.

To ensure security, US military commanders should—

- Provide HA force protection against virtually any person, element, or group.
- Know that HA success is proportional to the secure environment of the operation.
- Not underestimate the security risks to the force in either permissive or hostile environments. An inherent responsibility is the transition from a peaceful to combat posture, if needed.

RESTRAINT

Apply appropriate military capability prudently.

US military commanders will—

- Be constrained in the conduct of operations.
- Be advised of, promulgate, and understand detailed ROE. The inappropriate use of force may adversely affect legitimacy and neutrality.

- Establish appropriate channels to modify the ROE for unforeseen contingencies.
- Adhere to established procedures, particularly in dealing with the civilian populace.
- Understand that restraint is essential because a single act could cause critical political consequences.

LEGITIMACY

Promote the willing acceptance by the people of the right of the government to govern or of a group or agency to make and carry out decisions.

US military commanders and planners should—

- Ensure that HA operations adhere to internationally sanctioned standards.
- Know that host nation governmental authority should remain genuine.
- Know that neutrality is critical in gaining legitimacy. The purpose, delivery, or distribution of assistance should not be tied to the embracing or acceptance of any particular political, ethnic, social, economic, or religious creed by the intended beneficiaries.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Other areas a commander must consider when conducting HA operations include organizational preparedness, force tailoring, cultural respect, funding authority, Title 10 authority, legal authority, media coverage, and mission termination.

gathering, processing, and disseminating information in an HA environment. They must prepare forces for unique HA operations and anticipate equipping and training pipelines. Operational effectiveness can be directly enhanced and in-theater precrisis training minimized by periodic command post exercises.

ORGANIZATIONAL PREPAREDNESS

A commander must anticipate requirements for C² structures. The C² structure that directs the overall HA operation (UN, JTF) must be organized and have sufficient resources to meet its responsibilities. The C² structure must also be prepared to coordinate with nonmilitary groups, such as the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), which is part of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID); mission donor coordination groups; UN agencies; and PVOs, NGOs, and IOs.

Information/intelligence is essential to successful HA operations. HA commanders must be prepared to deal with the difficulties of

FORCE TAILORING

Commanders must consider types, numbers, education and training, and equipment of HA forces in relation to the required HA tasks. They must tailor forces to meet specific HA objectives and requirements as well as potential threats.

CULTURAL RESPECT

US forces tasked with HA missions should be aware of the cultural diversity integral to international HA. US cultural perspectives may not be relevant to many foreign HA recipients or to some NGOs, PVOs, and IOs.

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Military forces should avoid imposing ethnocentric standards on a group that resists those standards. For example, some cultures have clearly established guidelines for the consumption or avoidance of certain foods, the sanctity of religious structures, the appropriateness of certain types of behavior, and so on. Because of their beliefs, those cultures may refuse some forms of assistance.

Operations with a multinational task force present unique cross-cultural challenges for HA forces. Nations that are traditional military rivals may, in a disaster situation, support the same HA operation. Extensive and effective liaison reduces cultural barriers.

FUNDING AUTHORITY

The financial aspect of any HA operation is one of the biggest problems the CJTF faces. Logistics support can quickly accrue a significant level of expense. The longer the HA operation lasts, the greater the commitment of resources. Every HA operation must address the legal authority and mechanisms that allow US forces to acquire and disburse supplies and services. All parties participating in the HA mission must understand the fiscal constraints imposed on military forces.

Normally, US military forces participating in HA missions are reimbursed for expenses if certain criteria are met. USAID/OFDA coordinates payment of expenses for actions it requests DOD to perform. However, DOD must coordinate with USAID/OFDA before it expends the funds. Costs incurred or funds expended without prior USAID/OFDA coordination, or costs exceeding available USAID/OFDA resources, are not normally reimbursed without congressional action.

LEGAL AUTHORITY

The President and the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF), as the National Command Authorities (NCA), approve HA missions. DOS requests DOD capabilities. The CJCS, by the authority and at the direction of the SECDEF, orders overseas deployments. The HA commander should be

aware of appropriate national and international directives, mandates, resolutions, or other documents related to the HA mission.

A military force is a legal, effective, and appropriate means for conducting an HA mission. To be legitimate, that force must exercise its authority for reasonable purposes and in accordance with international and domestic laws. HA forces must sustain the legitimacy of the operation and the host government. US military forces conducting HA must know the legitimate interests, prerogatives, and authority of various levels of civil government and agencies involved in HA and act accordingly (see Appendix B).

MEDIA COVERAGE

Commanders at all levels should anticipate extensive media coverage of HA activities. News media representatives are most likely on the scene or will soon arrive. Their interest in such operations is natural and should be facilitated to the maximum extent possible. Media coverage can assist the HA mission and support US national objectives. The importance of understanding the media is not so that commanders can control it but so they can anticipate its impact on HA operations and plans. The NCA and others may also use media coverage to measure the success of the mission.

The CJTF and his staff should develop a detailed public affairs (PA) strategy for the HA operation. This strategy should incorporate SECDEF, Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), and the supported commander in chiefs (CINC's) guidance. The CJTF and his staff maintain close coordination with the senior DOS representative in the AOR, as well as with other government agencies such as USAID and the US Information Service (USIS).

MISSION TERMINATION

Commanders should initiate planning for mission completion at the earliest possible opportunity. Although determining the parameters of the mission is part of the initial tasking, commanders should anticipate elusive, ill-defined mission completion criteria.

Commanders should engage civil agencies in developing mission completion criteria and ensure that clear guidelines are established with host nation agencies.
